POWER

THE NIB

THE NIB

Illustration by Mark Kaufman

100,000 DEAD AND OUR CITIES ARE ON FIRE.

As I write these words, that is the number of dead from COVID-19 in the U.S. over the last four months. And as we send this magazine to the printer, as it winds its way through the postal system, as it sits on your table for a week until you can get to it–by the time you read this, that number will be even higher. Over 1,000 people a day are still dying because of a government that refused to act in order to curtail the massive death toll it was warned about.

Meanwhile, protests have erupted across the nation in response to the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police. Black Lives Matter activists and their allies have been subjected to countless instances of unprovoked violence in response: beatings, rubber bullets, tear gas, and brazen attempts to run over protesters with police vehicles. This is the government rushing to act; a massive mobilization of force to put down an uprising.

WE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH PPE, BUT

WE SURE HAD ENOUGH RIOT GEAR.

Both of these events are revealing deep inequities in our country, exacerbated by a president whose incompetence and ruthlessness has left more people dead than anyone imagined. It has made it more clear than ever that what is truly essential work in society isn't valued beyond its ability to fuel economic gains for a small elite. It has revealed to many that the police are not only racist, but militarized, empowered to kill, and seemingly unaccountable.

This issue is about power–how our proximity to it changes our lives and limits our potential. In it, we examine whose history is represented in DNA tests, who controls our power grid, new organizing efforts, and how the pandemic has disrupted lives in disparate ways.

Power can be wielded through action or inaction in order to preserve itself. We have seen the devastating results of both approaches this year, from callously allowing thousands to die to repressing thousands of others asking for equal rights.

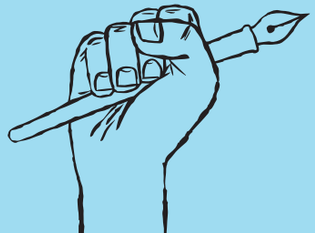
As the death toll from COVID-19 continues to rise and Trump pushes for the military to "dominate" our cities, things have felt incomprehensibly bleak. But power is being interrogated more than I have ever seen in my lifetime, from sexual assault to the climate change movement to public health disparities. As I watch our current crises unfold I see more people being radicalized to notions they wouldn't have entertained even a few months earlier. Unionize. Cancel the rent. Abolish the police.

BEHEAD BILLIONAIRES.

That last one hasn't quite caught on yet, but I'm pushing for wide adoption by the end of social distancing, when we can all get a little closer to power.

MATT BORS

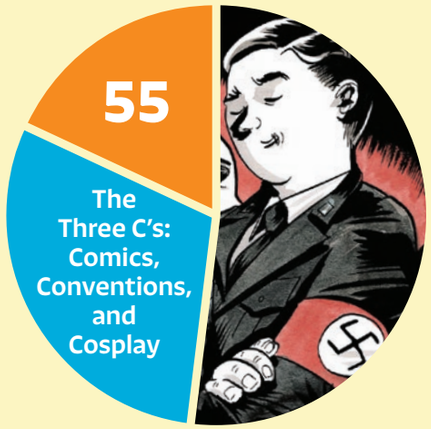
Matt Bors
Editor and Publisher

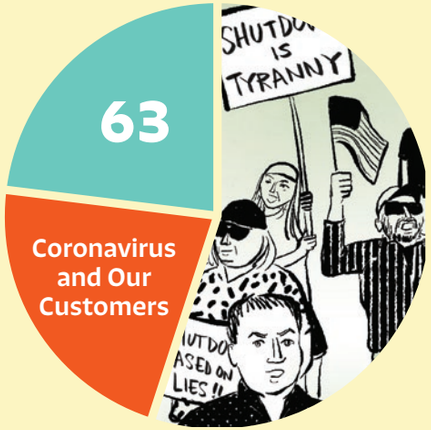


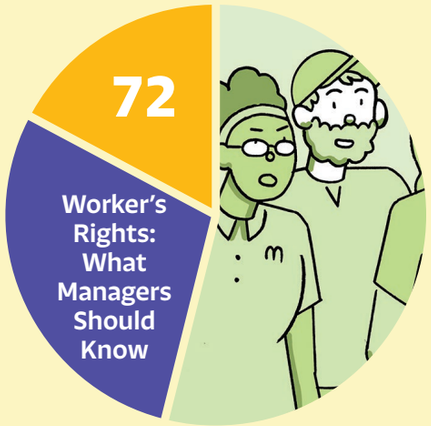
POWER

Consolidated Selected Statements of Operations

This year's report highlights strategies to create, build, and maintain power. The following data have been derived from audited consolidated statements by authorities on leadership and management strategies, made in conjunction with those projections, certain of which are contained in this report.







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PLUS

Covers and section illustrations by Richie Pope
Contributors page and masthead by Tom Scioli
Interstitial illustrations by Colleen Tighe
Table of contents and inside cover design and illustration by Mark Kaufman

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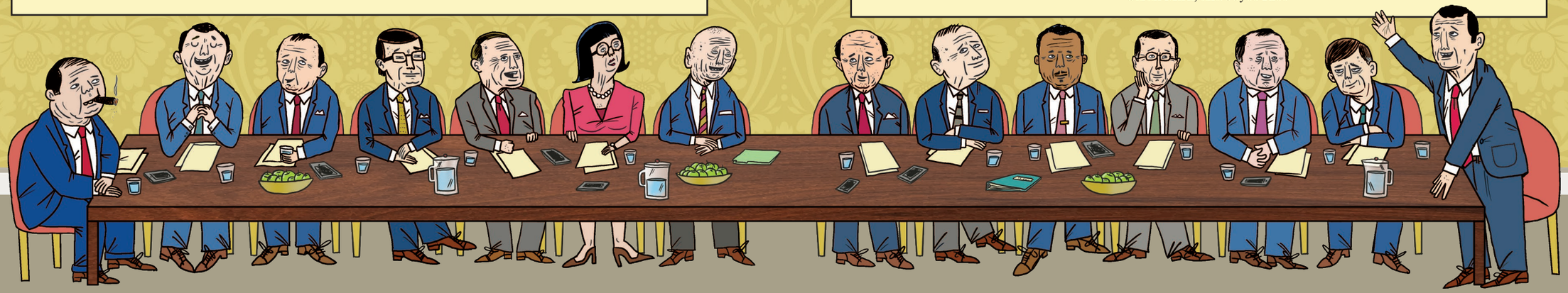
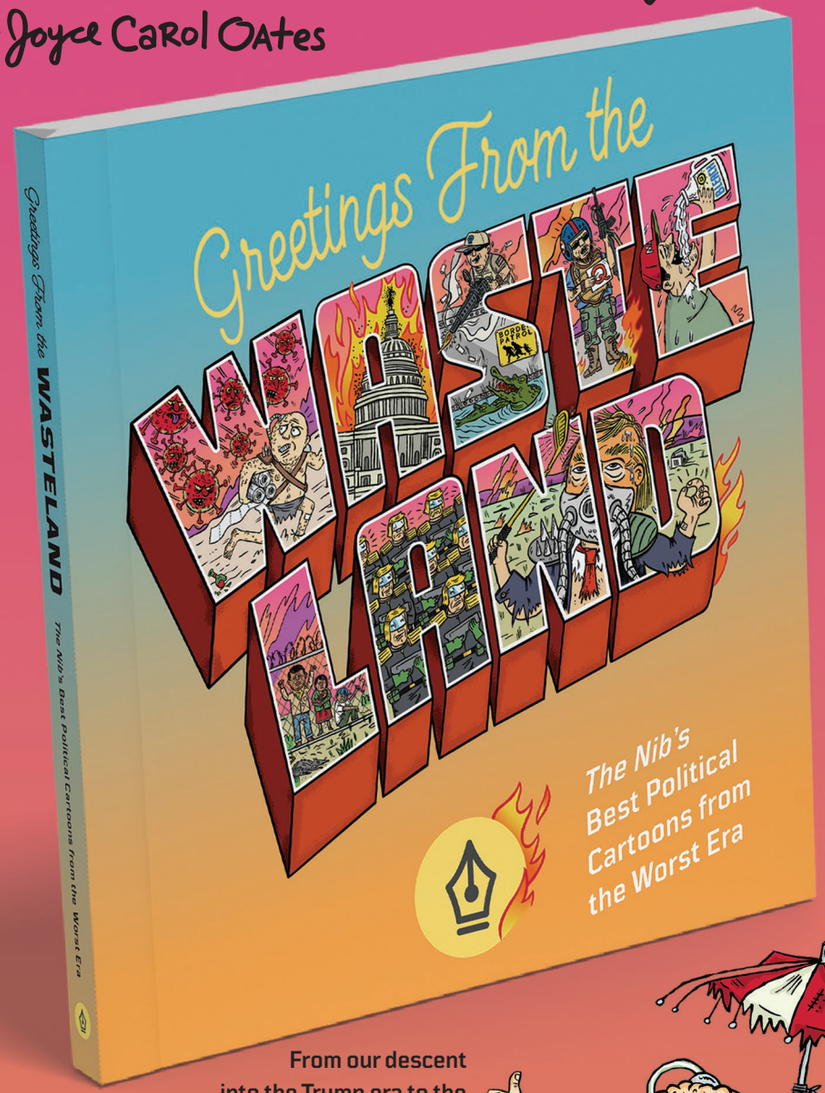


"Excellent Comics For a DeBased Age."
–Joyce Carol Oates



From our descent into the Trump era to the 2020 pandemic, we've collected 200 pages of our best political cartoons and satire on our dystopian hellscape. Featuring interviews and work from more than two dozen *Nib* cartoonists!

Order online at *thenib.com*/books.

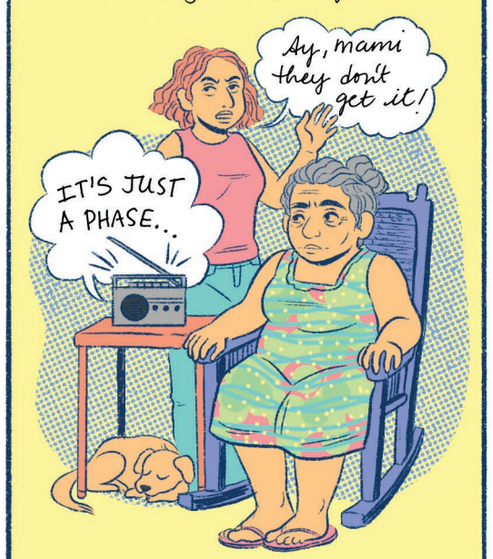
ON JULY 24, 2019, RICARDO ROSSELLÓ BECAME THE FIRST PUERTO RICAN GOVERNOR TO LEAVE OFFICE BEFORE ELECTIONS, AFTER A LEAKED CHAT EXPOSED HIM AND OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION AS HOMOPHOBIC AND MYSOGINISTIC BROS.

Borinquen Summer
by Rosa Colón Guerra

The chat lit a fire in the Puerto Rican people, TRIGGERING MASS DAILY PROTESTS AND A MASSIVE MARCH IN SAN JUAN.

FOR TWO YEARS DEEP RESENTMENT HAD BEEN BUILDING AGAINST ROSSELLO'S MISHANDLING OF HURRICANE MARÍA, ITS AFTERMATH, AND THE AUSTERITY MEASURES IMPOSED BY THE FISCAL OVERSIGHT MANAGEMENT BOARD.

PUNDITS DISMISSED THE PROTESTS, ARGUING THE SUMMER OF 2019 WOULDN'T HAVE A LASTING IMPACT ON POLITICS.
They were wrong.



MORE AND MORE CORRUPTION HAS BEEN UNCOVERED IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE NEW PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PNP).

WHILE THE POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PPD) HAS FADED INTO THE BACKGROUND, HOPING PEOPLE WILL VOTE FOR THEM BY DEFAULT.

YOUNG PROTESTERS ARE NOW REGISTERING AS CANDIDATES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS WITH THE PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY (PIP), ATTRACTED TO ITS PROGRESSIVE POLICIES AND FEW CONTROVERSIES...

Just as we protested, we felt the RESPONSIBILITY to contribute from the few electoral spaces available. Because the YOUNGER generations deserve to be represented in government and because we are TIRED of neoliberal politics being imposed by CONGRESS and SAN JUAN.

ANDRÉS GONZÁLEZ BERDECÍA WAS INSPIRED TO RUN FOR THE SENATE FOR THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY.

As a young woman and INDEPENDENTISTA I identify with the protesters' claims and I UNDERSTAND that it is important to begin OCCUPYING all the necessary spaces in order to achieve a TRANSFORMATION towards a PROGRESSIVE country, just and INDEPENDENT.

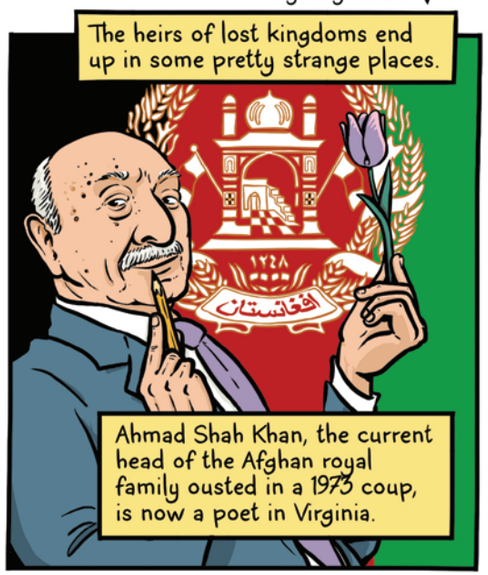
WOMEN ARE STILL A MINORITY IN PUERTO RICAN POLITICS, BUT ADRIANA GUTIÉRREZ COLÓN IS LOOKING TO CHANGE THAT.

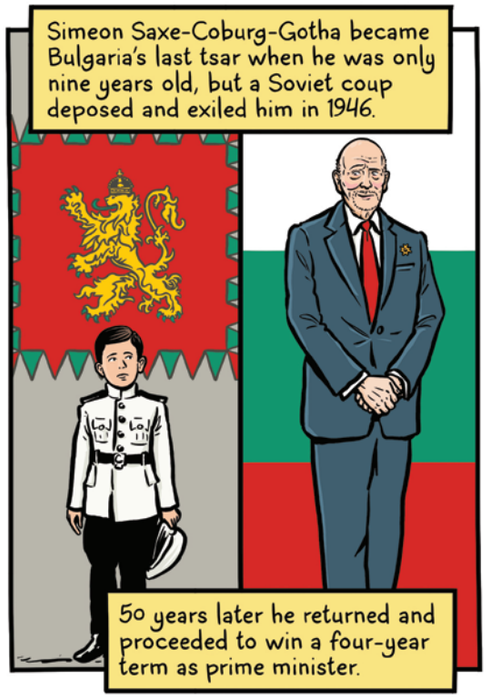
Puerto Ricans are emboldened.

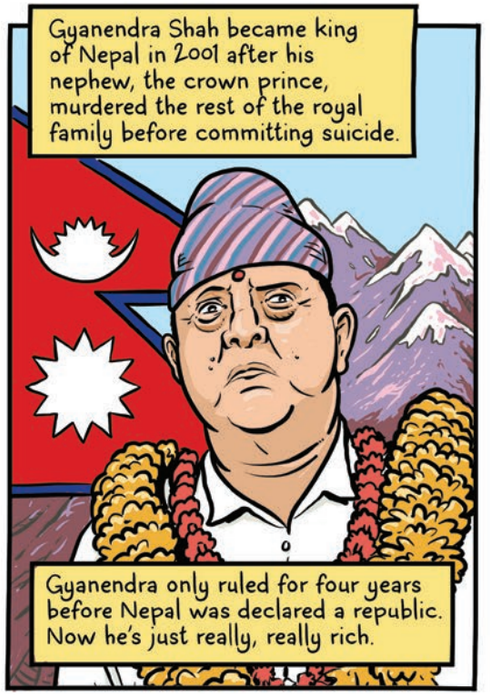
PROTESTERS DRAG GUILLOTINES TO LA FORTALEZA; ACTIVISTS INTERRUPT CANDIDATES' COFFEE BREAKS WITH CACEROLAZOS; OTHERS ARE DETERMINED TO MAKE GOVERNMENT WORK FOR THE PEOPLE FROM THE INSIDE. THE OLD GUARD SHOULD BE SCARED BECAUSE NOW IN PUERTO RICO, it's summer all year round.

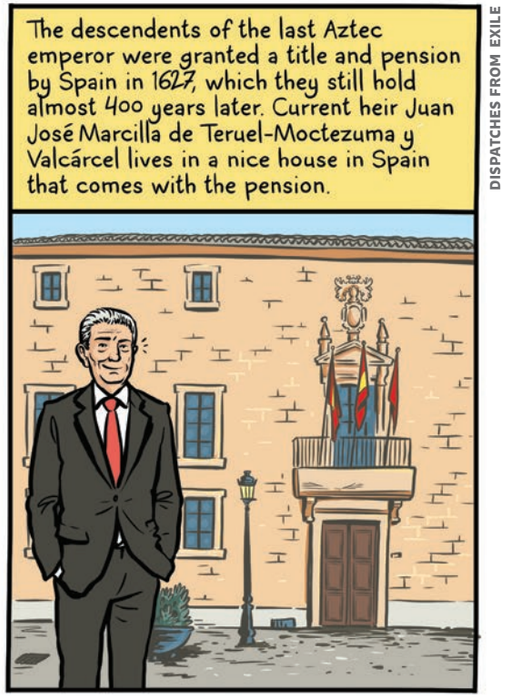
ROYAL REMNANTS

By Andy Warner









DISPATCHES FROM EXILE

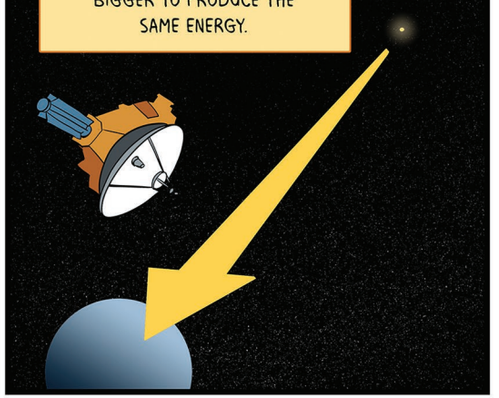
OF PLUTONIUM AND PLUTO

MATTHEW R FRANCIS
AND MAKI NARO

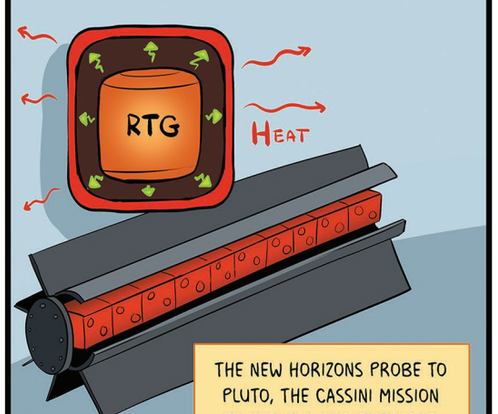
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO POWER A SPACECRAFT TO THE OUTER SOLAR SYSTEM?

SOLAR POWER WON'T CUT IT.

AT ITS CLOSEST POINT TO THE SUN, PLUTO IS 30 TIMES FARTHER AWAY THAN EARTH, SO THE SURFACE AREA OF A SOLAR PANEL ON A PLUTO-FARING PROBE WOULD HAVE TO BE 900 TIMES BIGGER TO PRODUCE THE SAME ENERGY.

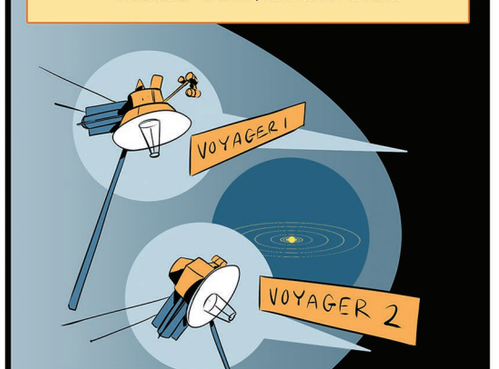


INSTEAD, SPACECRAFT BUILDERS USE NUCLEAR "BATTERIES" CALLED RADIOISOTOPE THERMOELECTRIC GENERATORS (RTGS), WHICH CONVERT THE HEAT FROM RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL INTO ELECTRICITY.



THE NEW HORIZONS PROBE TO PLUTO, THE CASSINI MISSION TO SATURN, AND THE MARS CURIOSITY ROVER USE RTGS.

THE RTG ISOTOPE* OF CHOICE IS PLUTONIUM-238 (PU-238), WHICH HAS A HALF-LIFE** OF ABOUT 88 YEARS. THE VOYAGER PROBES, LAUNCHED IN 1977, ARE STILL GOING.



*DIFFERENT ISOTOPES OF THE SAME ELEMENTS HAVE DIFFERENT AMOUNTS OF NEUTRONS.

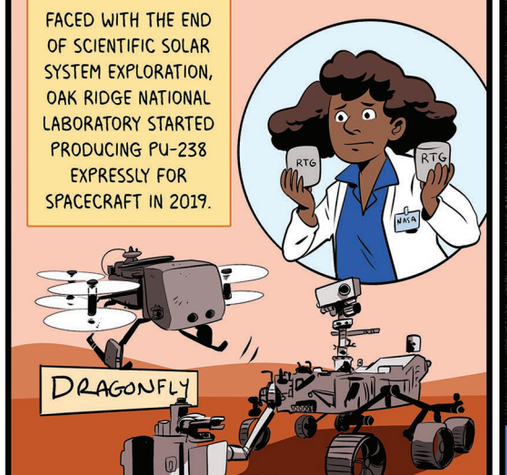
**HALF-LIFE IS HOW LONG HALF THE ATOMS IN A MATERIAL TAKE TO DECAY.

DURING THE COLD WAR, PU-238 WAS PRODUCED AS A BY-PRODUCT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE UNITED STATES MADE ITS LAST CHUNK OF PU-238 IN 1988, AND GLOBAL SUPPLIES HAVE BEEN DWINDLING EVER SINCE.

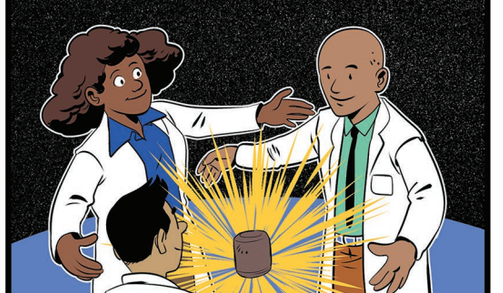
NO SENSIBLE PERSON WOULD SUGGEST RESTARTING NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT, EVEN IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE. UNFORTUNATELY, NUCLEAR REACTORS THAT MAKE ISOTOPES FOR MEDICAL OR ENERGY PURPOSES AREN'T THE RIGHT KIND FOR PU-238.

NASA HAS ENOUGH PLUTONIUM STOCKPILES TO MAKE RTGS FOR THE MARS PERSEVERANCE ROVER AND THE DRAGONFLY MISSION TO TITAN, BUT NOT MUCH ELSE.

FACED WITH THE END OF SCIENTIFIC SOLAR SYSTEM EXPLORATION, OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY STARTED PRODUCING PU-238 EXPRESSLY FOR SPACECRAFT IN 2019.



IT WAS COLD WAR NUCLEAR BRINKMANSHIP THAT GAVE US THE MEANS FOR SPACE EXPLORATION. IN THIS NEW ERA, WILL THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD BE WILLING TO FUND THE PEACEFUL NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT NEEDED TO PUSH OUT EVER FURTHER WITHOUT FALLING BACK ON NATIONALISTIC POSTURING?



In October of 2019 I (Luke Healy) go to Chicago with my father, where I attend...

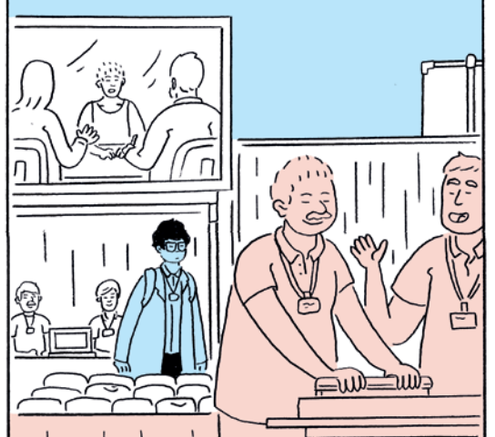
The International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference.

One of the largest law enforcement events in the USA, it is bizarrely similar to a comics festival.

Its main draw is a convention floor, crammed full with vendors large and small. Instead of comic books, they sell rifles, armor, surveillance technology, and tactical vehicles.

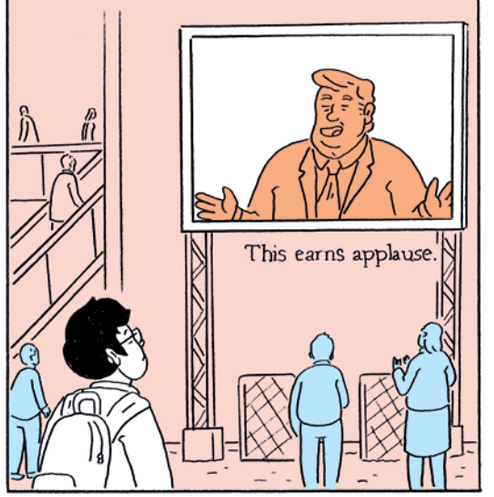
Many of the stalls offer product customizations promoting various causes, the most popular of which is breast cancer awareness.

At one stand, a company sells interrogation assistance software.

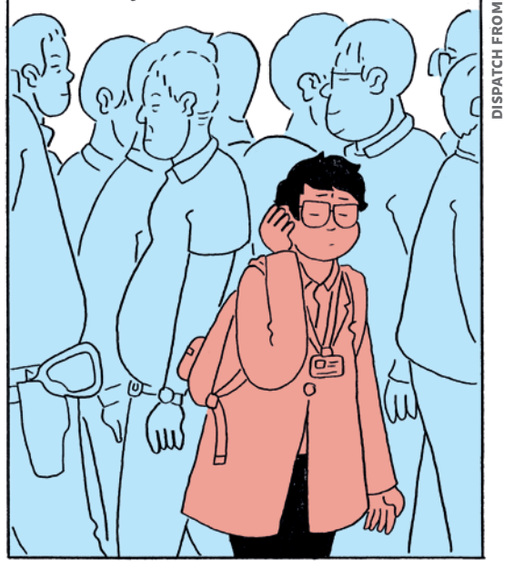


At the next stand over, men screen-print quirky slogans onto commemorative IACP t-shirts.

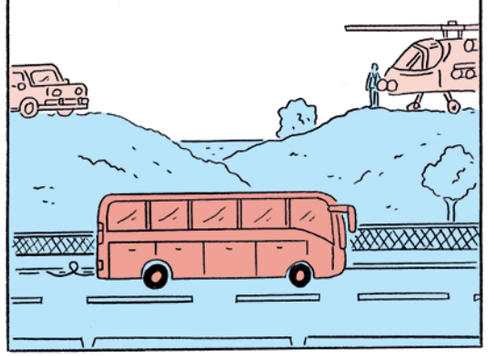
Donald Trump gives a speech at the conference. He gloats about releasing $600 million worth of surplus army equipment to police forces across the U.S.



In Ireland, the police do not carry guns. I am self-conscious that I have the longest hair of any man in this room.



I catch the last bus out before everything locks down for Trump's departure, passing backstreets deserted by all but military vehicles.



Outside Trump tower, people protest in vivid orange paint.

I think of the police, with their high-powered assault rifles.

WHO GETS TO LIVE IN THE CITY OF THE FUTURE?

BY TRINIDAD ESCOBAR

Quoted in "Corruption Scandals Plague Philippines SEA Games," DW

FLUID

SCRIPT: DORIAN ALEXANDER. ART: ROBIN TESS.

A MUTANT PROCESSING CENTER IS UNDER ATTACK BY THE SHAPE-SHIFTER KNOWN AS **MYSTIQUE**, SOMETIMES AFFILIATED WITH THE TERRORIST GROUP THE **X-MEN**.

CAREFUL, SHE'S ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS MUTANTS THERE IS.

WHY, BECAUSE I CAN BE READ AS TRANS?

hrkk

THOSE WHO HAVE TRIED TO RIGIDLY DEFINE GENDER HATE TO BE REMINDED THAT THE IDENTITIES THEY ASSIGN US AREN'T FIXED.

IF NOT EVEN OUR BODIES ARE STABLE AND PERMANENT, THEN NEITHER ARE THEIR HIERARCHIES OF POWER.

LOOK AT HOW I'VE BEEN CHARACTERIZED...

FEMININE...

NON-WHITE...

... QUEER.

EVERYTHING A SOCIETY BENT ON WHITE SUPREMACY HAS DEEMED CRIMINAL AND DANGEROUS.

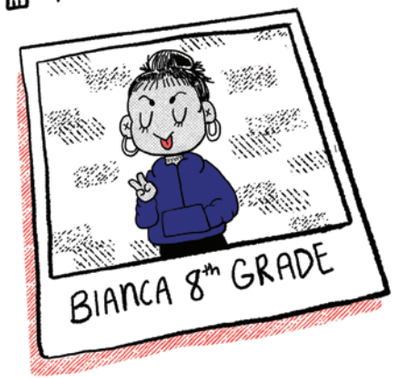
BECAUSE EACH REPRESENTS A FLUIDITY. THE THREAT OF **CHANGE**.

IT SHOULDN'T BE A SURPRISE THAT TRANSNESS IS THE NEWEST FACE OF THIS THREAT.

THE COURAGE TO END THE TYRANNY OF THE BODY IS A SUPERPOWER IN ITS OWN RIGHT — A POWER THAT PROMISES A BETTER WORLD.

REBELLING FROM THE REBEL GIRL TROPE

BY BIANCA YUNISE



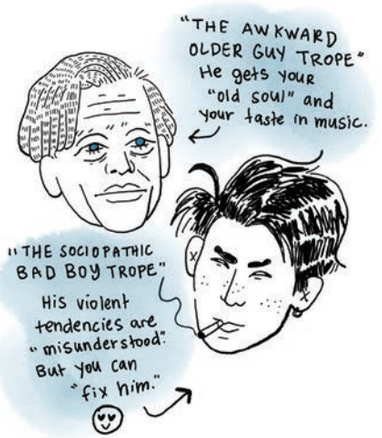
I'VE ALWAYS FELT PRETTY CONFIDENT IN WHO I AM, UNTIL RECENTLY.

I CRAVED CONTENT ABOUT LOST GIRLS WHO DIDN'T FIT IN. GIRLS WHO WERE OFFBEAT, INTELLECTUALS, AND WENT AGAINST SOCIAL NORMS.

I NEVER FELT LIKE I FIT IN GROWING UP. ALTHOUGH A GOOD PORTION OF "REBEL GIRL" CONTENT LACKED INTERSECTIONAL REPRESENTATION, THESE GIRLS DIDN'T JUST REFLECT MYSELF, THEY WERE FICTIONAL FRIENDS.

SOON I BELIEVED THAT IF I LIVED OUT SOME OF THE CHAOTIC CHARACTERISTICS THESE CHARACTERS HAD I WOULD OBTAIN THE SAME STATUS OF COOL.

BUT A COMMON THREAD OF "COOL" IS MERELY SUMMED BY A TRAGIC LIFE AND FINDING REFUGE IN A GANG OF QUIRKY "MISFITS." BUT THESE MISFITS OFTEN TURN OUT TO BE TOXIC PEOPLE AND PREDATORY MEN.



I'M DONE UPLIFTING A TROPE THAT INSTEAD OF GIVING ME A SENSE OF IDENTITY HAS ESSENTIALLY DONE MORE DAMAGE THAN GOOD. I'M NOW LEARNING TO DEFINE MYSELF BY MY OWN RULES THAN ONES CREATED FOR SALACIOUS FICTION.

BIANCA YUNISE

THE RESPONSE

Each issue we ask four cartoonists one question. For this Response we wanted to know: When have you felt the most powerless?

Max Loh

It started with a promise.

You're not like the other boys.

You can keep a secret, right?

Yes, I can.

An invisible wound.

Then a realization, many, many years later.

I still can't believe that teacher dropped you from his class!

Was it wrong?

Is that why it was a secret?

Something crumbles.

I'm so stupid.

It's my fault if he claimed more victims.

Mom would be devastated if she knew.

Your anger and sadness come in waves, and you hate feeling sorry for yourself.

And yet...

Dear, I... I need to tell you something.

...part of you understands you need to be vulnerable in order to heal.

A. Andrews

As a disabled person, I think a lot of people might be surprised to hear that my body doesn't really make me feel powerless.

Oh my god. You are so brave.

Uh, thanks? Do I... know you...?

This seems excessive. I just asked for pre-boarding.

It's other people that do.

I bench-press the weight of a world's worth of ignorance on a daily basis.

Not too bad for a cripple!

I see **you** do this, and I'm like, "what's **my** excuse?" Y'know?!

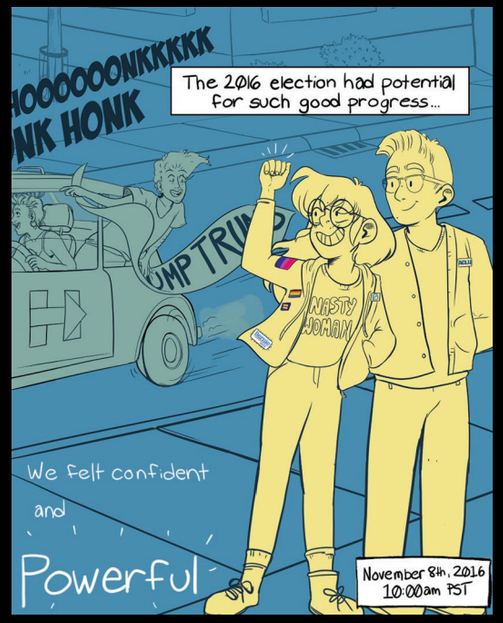
So, can you still... y'know?!

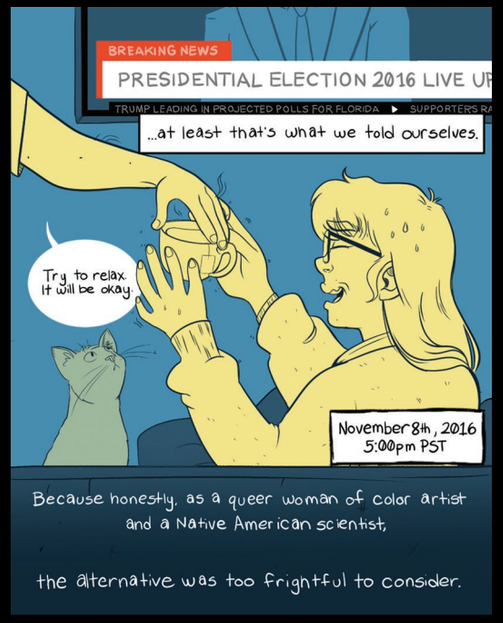
I couldn't bring myself to get out of bed if I was you!

Wow! Really puts all **my** problems into perspective.

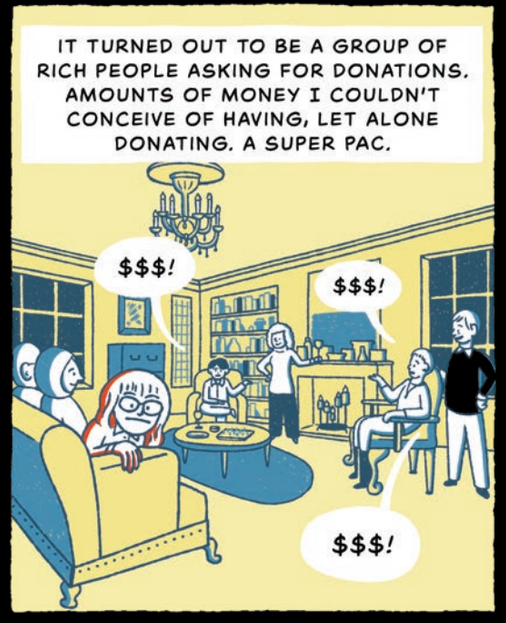
And still...

Taylor Crockett





Ally Shwed

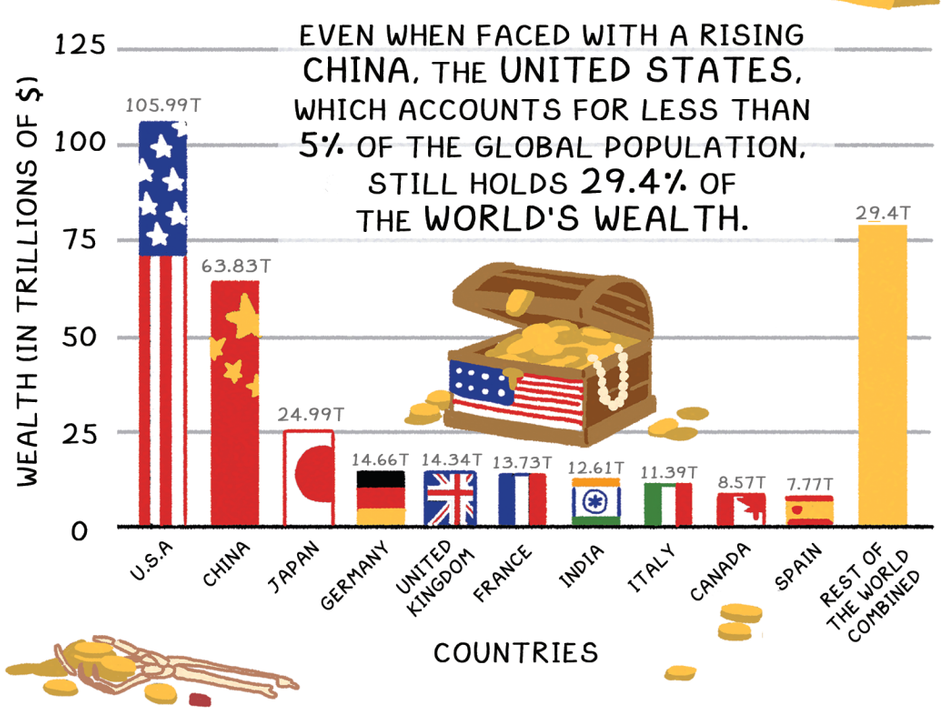


The Nib Bureau of Statistics

When it comes to money and energy, the power is in the details.

By Xulin Wang

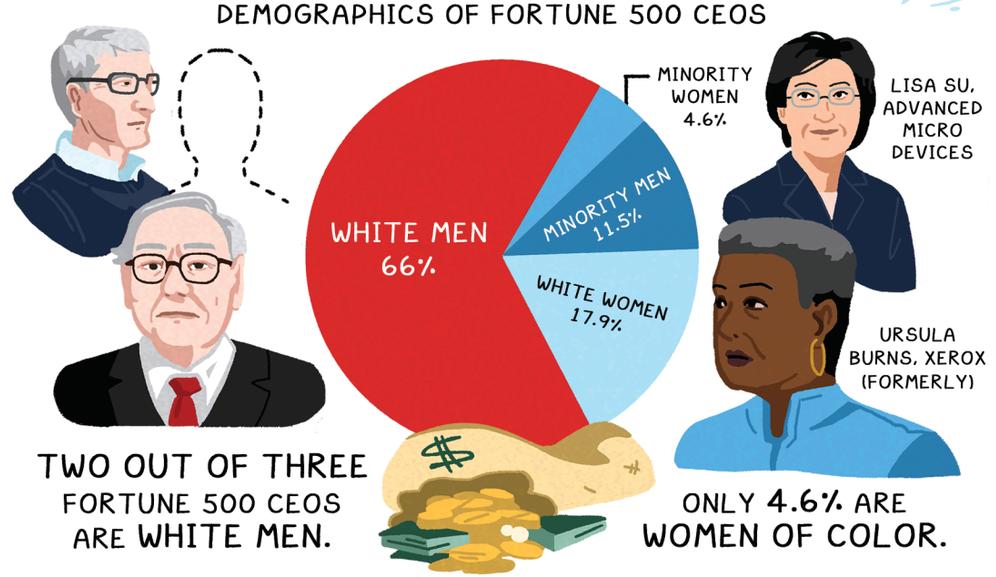
MONEY



SOURCE: CREDIT SUISSE GLOBAL WEALTH REPORT 2019

BOSSES

DEMOGRAPHICS OF FORTUNE 500 CEOS



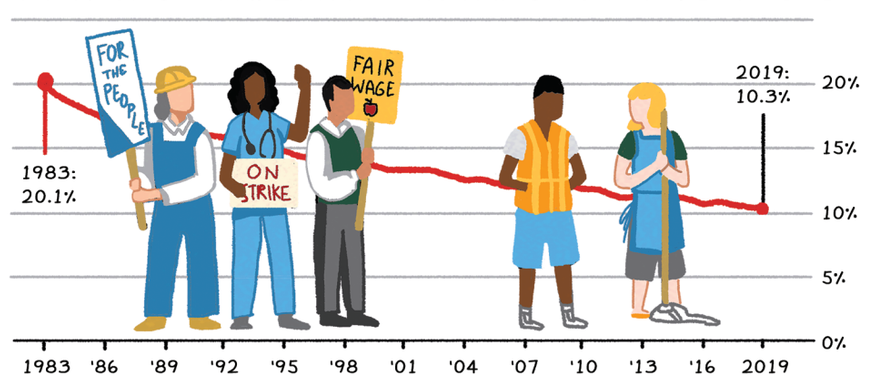
TWO OUT OF THREE FORTUNE 500 CEOS ARE WHITE MEN.

ONLY 4.6% ARE WOMEN OF COLOR.

SOURCE: DELOITTE AND THE ALLIANCE FOR BOARD DIVERSITY, "MISSING PIECES REPORT" (2018)

WORKERS

PERCENT OF U.S. EMPLOYEES WHO ARE UNIONIZED, 1983-2019



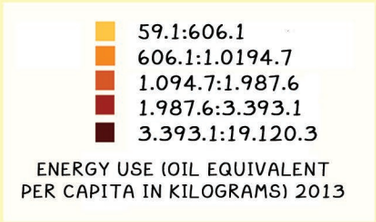
IN THE LAST 36 YEARS, THE SHARE OF AMERICANS IN UNIONS HAS NEARLY HALVED.

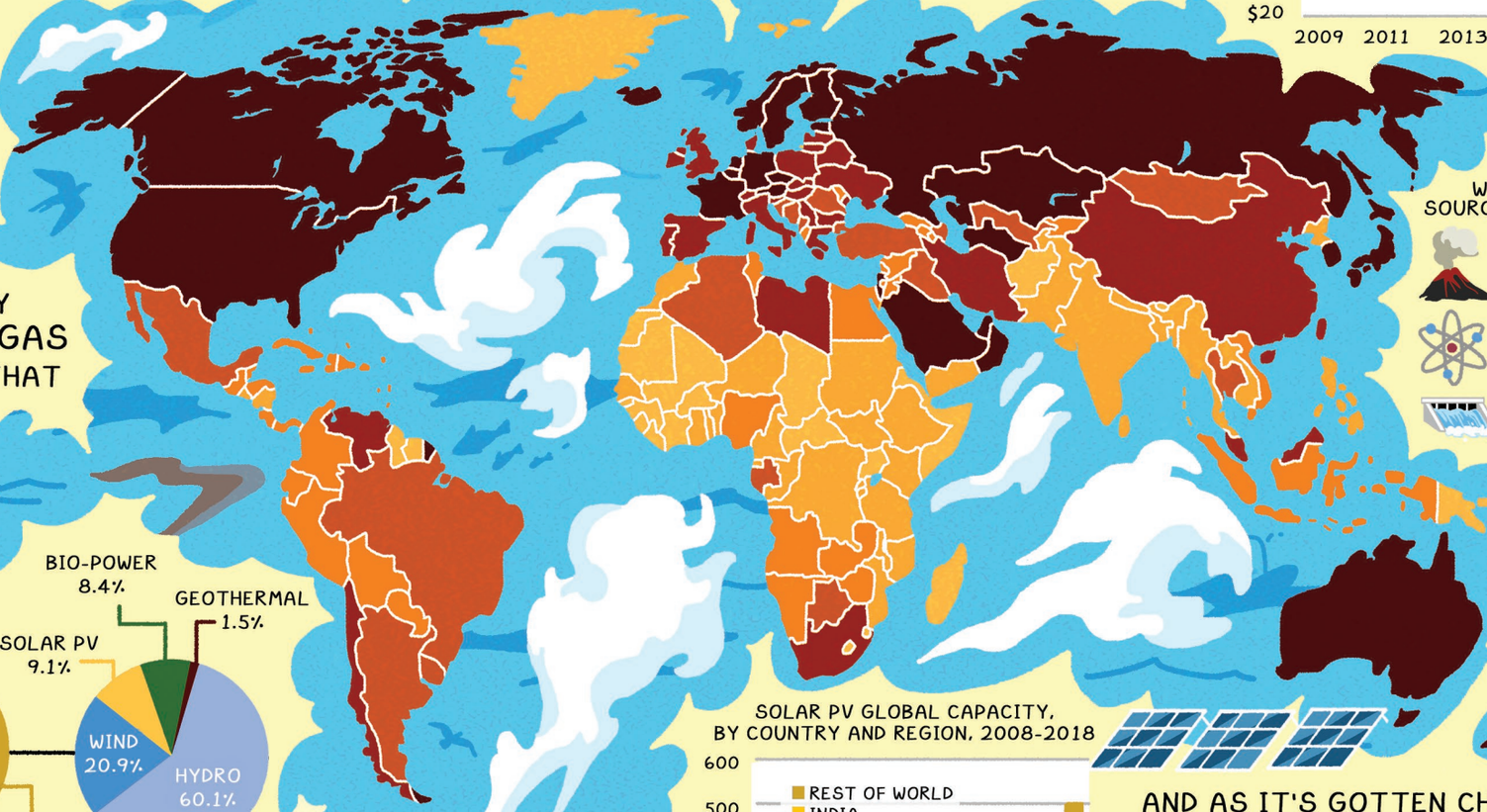
SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

WHAT POWERS THE WORLD?

MAP DATA SOURCE: WORLD BANK

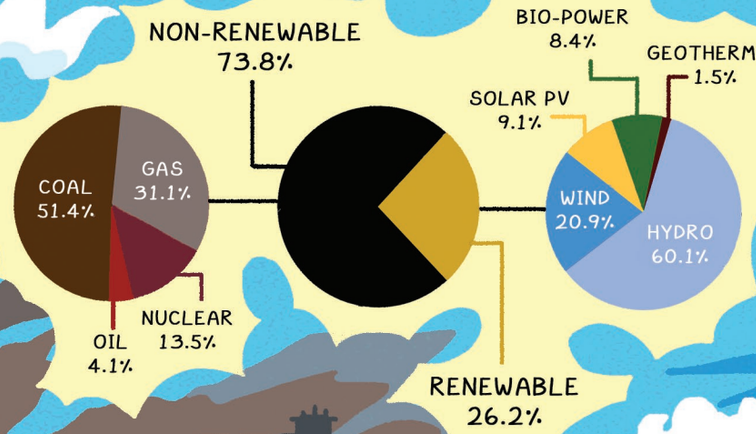
NORTH AMERICA, WESTERN AND NORTHERN EUROPE, THE ARABIAN PENINSULA, AND EAST ASIA CONSUME THE MOST ENERGY PER CAPITA ON EARTH.





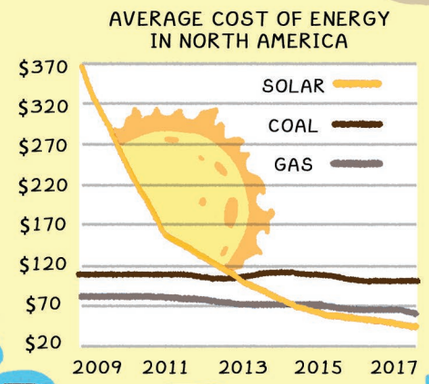
NON-RENEWABLE DIRTY RESOURCES LIKE COAL AND GAS ARE STILL WHERE MOST OF THAT POWER COMES FROM.

SOURCE: REN21 "RENEWABLES 2019 GLOBAL STATUS REPORT"



BUT THINGS ARE CHANGING. THE PRICE OF SOLAR HAS FALLEN A SHOCKING 84% IN THE PAST DECADE, AND IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD, IT'S NOW CHEAPER THAN COAL AND GAS.

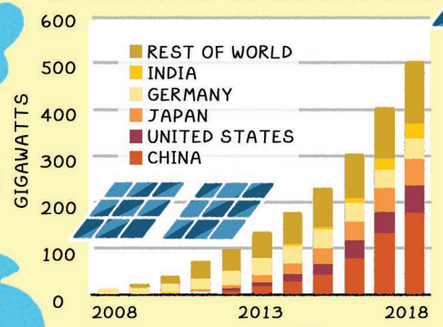
SOURCE: LAZARD'S LEVELIZED COST OF ENERGY ANALYSIS (2018)



THE NIB BUREAU OF STATISTICS

WORLDWIDE SOURCES OF ENERGY

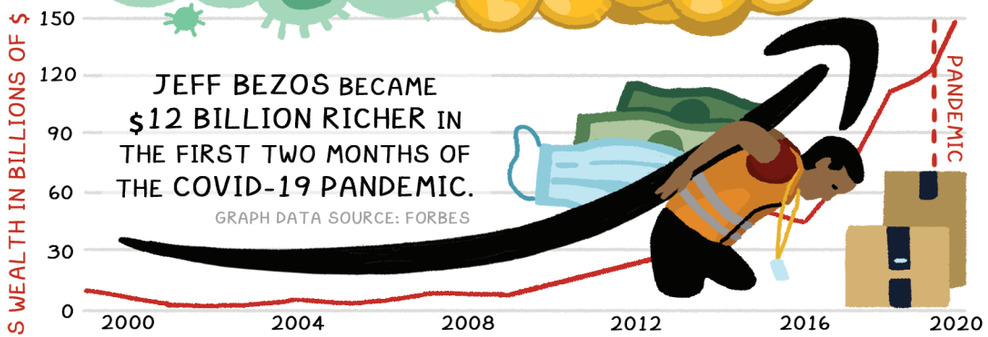
SOLAR PV GLOBAL CAPACITY, BY COUNTRY AND REGION, 2008-2018



AND AS IT'S GOTTEN CHEAPER, THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ENERGY CONSUMERS, ESPECIALLY CHINA, THE U.S., AND JAPAN, HAVE BEEN BUILDING MORE AND MORE SOLAR INFRASTRUCTURE.

SOURCE: REN21 "RENEWABLES 2019 GLOBAL STATUS REPORT"

PANDEMIC PROFITEERING



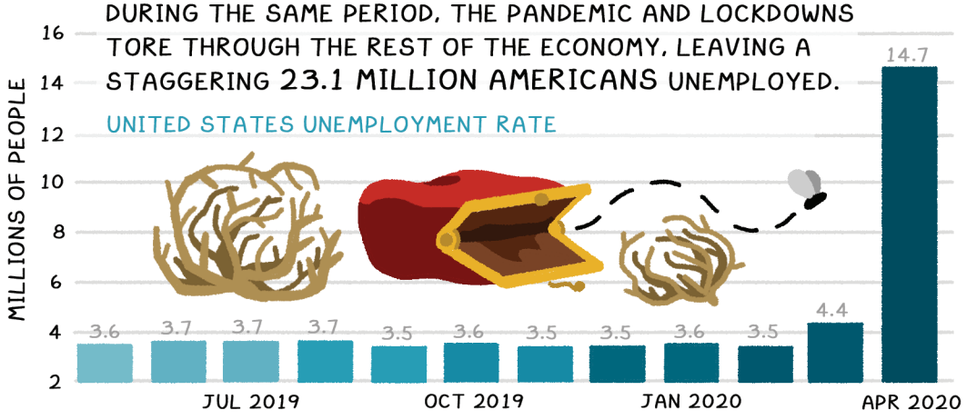
JEFF BEZOS BECAME $12 BILLION RICHER IN THE FIRST TWO MONTHS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

GRAPH DATA SOURCE: FORBES

BUT THAT'S JUST THE LATEST PART OF A TREND LINE: SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 2020, BEZOS HAS BECOME $25 BILLION RICHER.

HIS COMPANY, AMAZON, ANNOUNCED IT WAS HIRING 175,000 PEOPLE IN THE U.S. TO MEET SURGING DEMAND FOR ITS DELIVERIES.

DURING THE SAME PERIOD, THE PANDEMIC AND LOCKDOWNS TORE THROUGH THE REST OF THE ECONOMY, LEAVING A STAGGERING 23.1 MILLION AMERICANS UNEMPLOYED.



THIS IS A NUMBER UNSEEN SINCE RECORDS BEGAN BEING KEPT AFTER THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

SOURCE: TRADING ECONOMICS | U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS | INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES "BILLIONARE BONANZA 2020"

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CartoonCollections.com/TheNib

CARTOON COLLECTIONS

Illustration by Trevor Hoey

The Nib Interview

Ta-Nehisi Coates has focused his career on exploring power and race through fiction, nonfiction, and superhero comics. He spoke with *Nib* editor Matt Bors and Ezra Claytan Daniels illustrated.

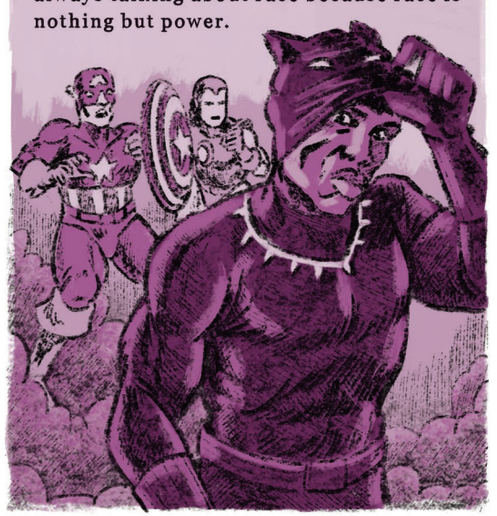
There is an implicit message in American film, in American TV—which is probably the largest instrument for deploying American mythology—that black people are subhuman.

Who people see as a protagonist is integral to who they believe can and cannot be human in the world.

I actually think that Trump has deep, deep roots in myth and the stories that this country tells itself. I think he was made possible by that. I don't think he was possible without it.

Marvel was my first notion of inclusion in pop art. This is the first place that I saw people of color actively integrated into the universe and into the fabric and not necessarily in a subordinate way.

[Black Panther] rarely directly addresses race, and then at the same time he's always talking about race because race is nothing but power.



And the movie is the same way; there are no moments where T'Challa stands up and has to give a speech on what it means to be a black superhero or anything like that. The statement is in the art itself; it's in the presence of the actors.

The effects of that are not immediately shown. You're not going to go see ***Black Panther*** and that's going to have a policy effect. But talk about kids who are going to grow up in a world where Black Panther is just Black Panther.

Talk about white kids out in the suburbs, out in the city, wherever they are, who want to be Black Panther for Halloween. Now you're talking about something else.

Because as much as that seems like the politics of just symbols, it's actually the politics of who gets to be human and who doesn't.

Power Grabs

"This nation has no right to expect that it will always have wise and humane rulers sincerely attached to the principles of the Constitution. Wicked men, ambitious of power, with hatred of liberty and contempt of law, may fill the place once occupied by Washington and Lincoln, and if this right is conceded, the dangers to human liberty are frightful to contemplate."

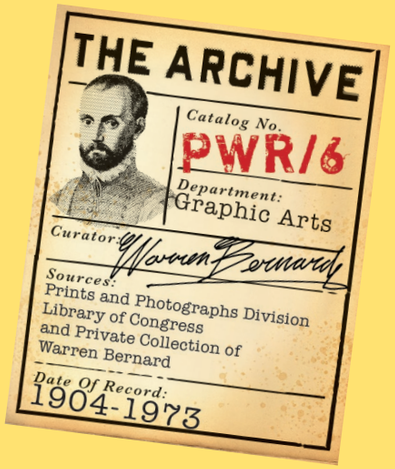
—Supreme Court Judge David Davis, 1866

President Theodore Roosevelt opened the 20th century by taking the position that any power not explicitly forbidden either by the U.S. Constitution or by law was there for the president's taking. Numerous occupants of the White House since Roosevelt have taken this position, from Woodrow Wilson to Richard Nixon to today's most unwelcome usurper of presidential power.

The 120 years since Roosevelt's expansive opinion have seen numerous presidents accused of this "hatred of liberty and contempt of law," making the terms *impeachment, executive overreach, abuse of power,* and *overstepping the Constitution* all too familiar to the American people.

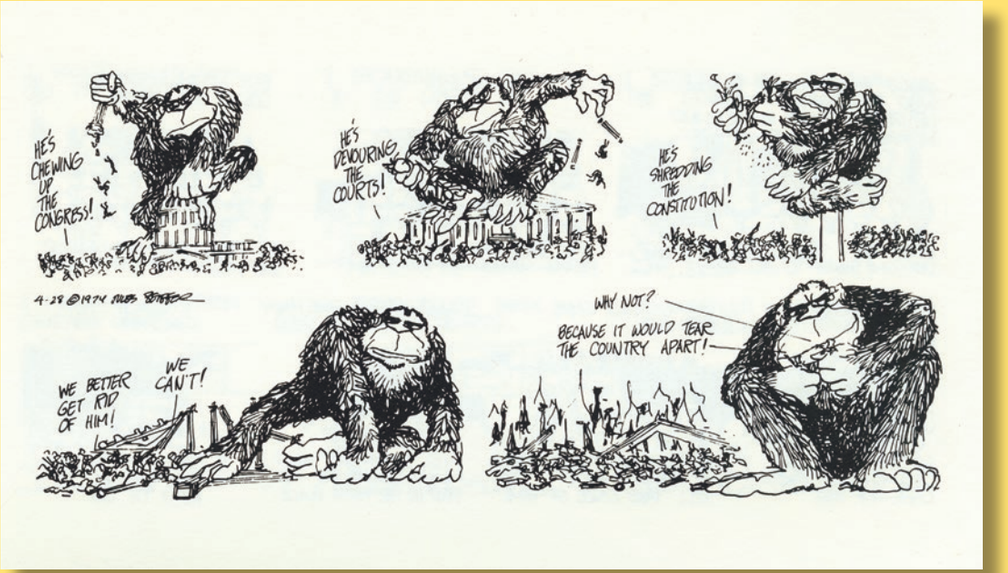
Whether showing presidents as shredders of the Constitution or pretenders to an American throne, political cartoonists make it clear to the public the dangers of unchecked presidential power, with their prescient views proven more correct than not for every single president so targeted.

Warren Bernard
author/lecturer on the history of editorial-political cartoons and the executive director of the Small Press Expo.



"L'état, c'est moi" is attributed to King Louis XIV of France, who ruled from 1643 until 1715, and translates to "The state is I." Louis XIV was referring to the divine right of kings, in which their rule is absolute and cannot be questioned, here embodied in both dress and stature by President Theodore Roosevelt.

Joseph Keppler Jr., "L'État, C'est Moi" (1904), *Puck Magazine.* Courtesy of the Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.



Jules Feiffer (1973), *The Village Voice.*

In 1938, FDR tried to consolidate his power in Congress by actively supporting liberal Congressional candidates against conservative Democrats who FDR felt were not in line with his policies (shown here as the Opposition brick). FDR had been accused numerous times during his administration of being a European-style dictator. Here he is dressed wearing spats and a morning coat favored by Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, to whom FDR was sometimes compared. This attempted purge in 1938 added to his "dictatorial" image, but ultimately failed as none of the people targeted by FDR lost their election.

Charles Sykes "Evidently No Laughing Matter" (1941), *Philadelphia Evening Ledger.*

President Wilson was accused of ignoring the Constitution with his plan for the United States being part of the League of Nations, as the League would have overridden the constitutional right by Congress to declare war or commit U.S. troops to overseas actions.

Albert T. Reid, "A Mere Scrap Book" (1919), *Selections of the Current Cartoons Drawn by Albert T. Reid.*

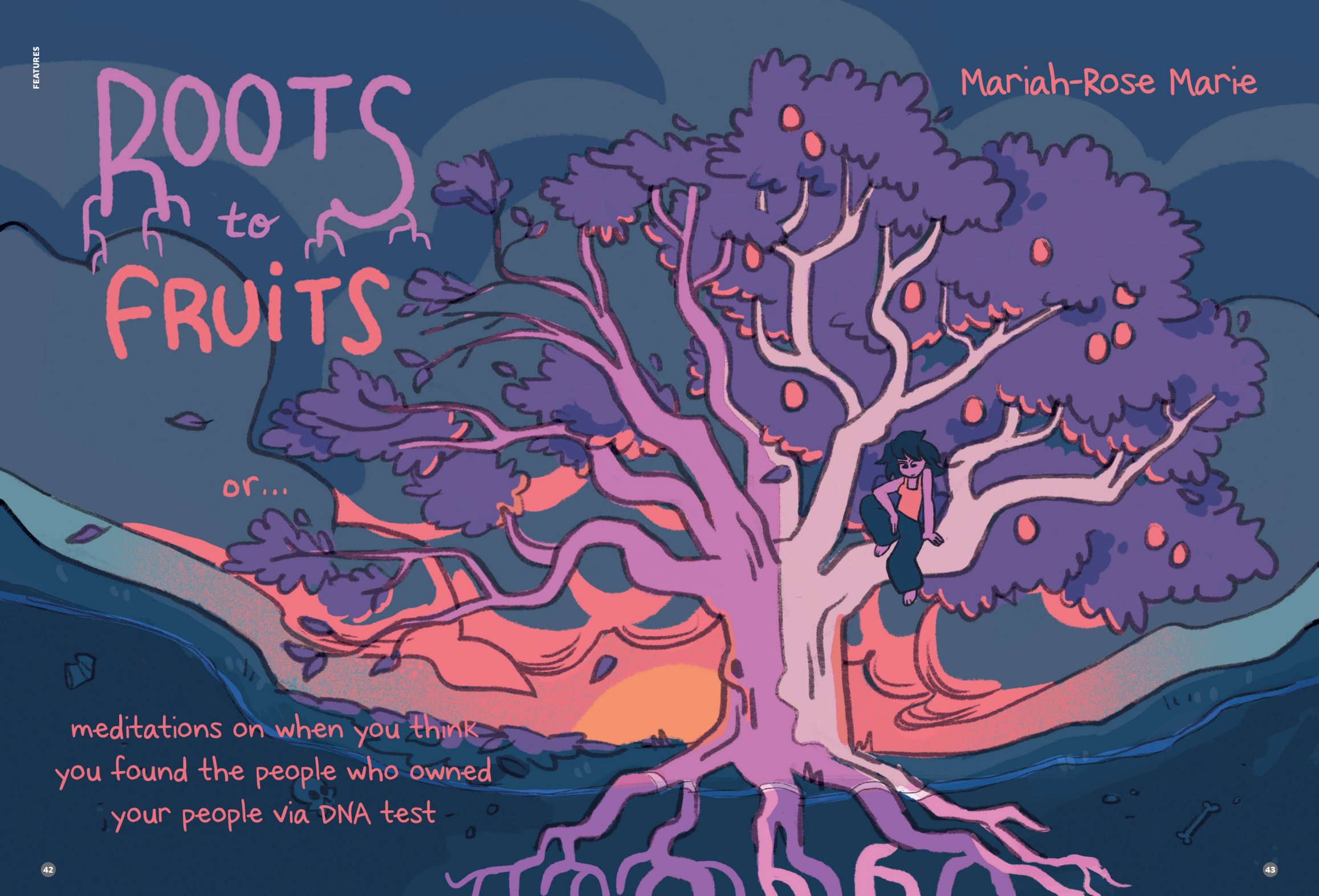
FREE ABORTION
ON DEMAND
NO APOLOGY!

ROOTS to FRUITS

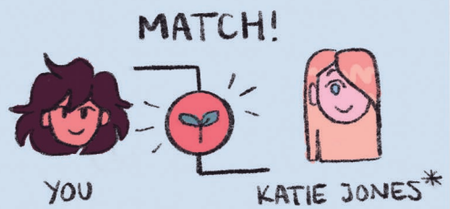
or...

meditations on when you think you found the people who owned your people via DNA test

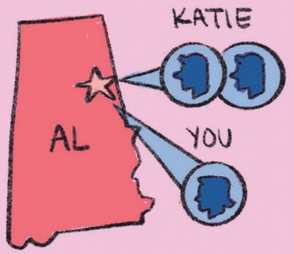
Mariah-Rose Marie



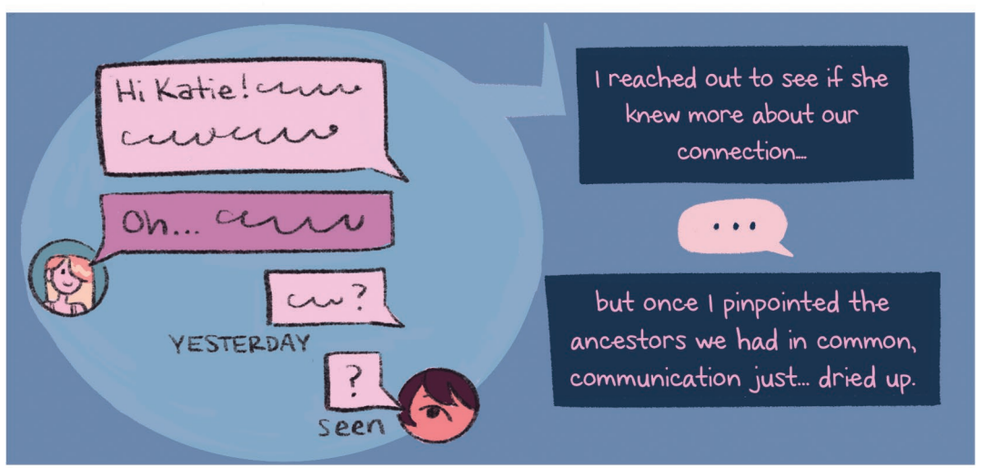
Two years ago while I was perusing DNA matches on an ancestry site, I found a relative with several family names and cities in common.



* all names changed



Specifically my maternal (mostly black) grandmother's family name and location is intertwined with two of her (white) male ancestors in Alabama during the mid-end of the 1800s.

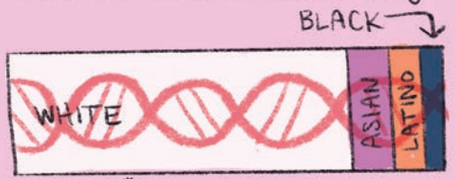


I was so upset by the exchange that I put it out of my mind for months.

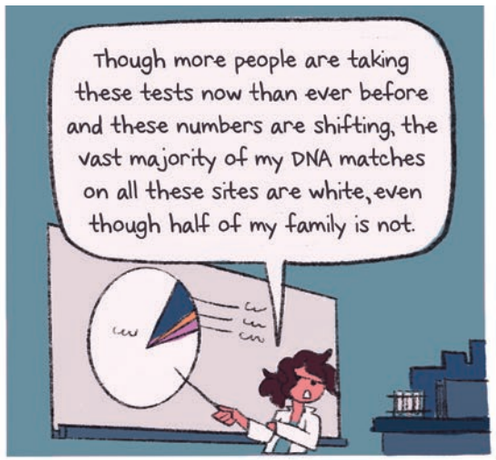
Knowing where you come from is a powerful thing.

I've noticed a pattern with those who question my interest in family history...

Although the legal ethics and scientific accuracy of these saliva tests are constantly being questioned, the demographics of who is taking these tests and on who the data is based is telling.*



*= based on my own results compiled from 23andMe, myHeritage, GEDmatch, and Ancestry.



23andMe is especially transparent about where they fall short.

Generally, the available data looks like this.

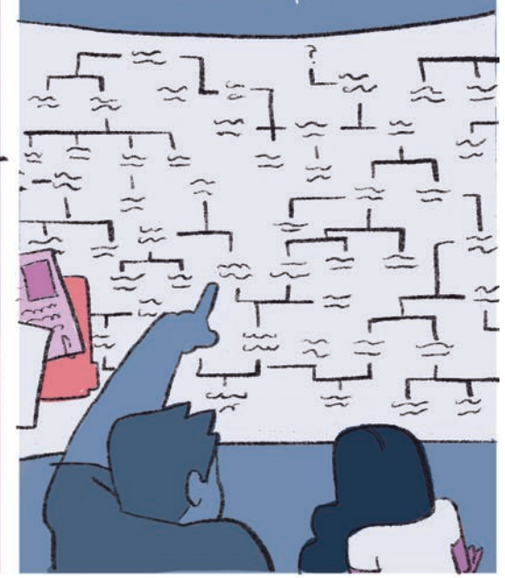
For example, I got this disclaimer underneath practically every single health report:

IMPORTANT ETHNICITIES

This result may be less relevant for you as variants for this test are best studied in people of European descent.

But it's not just the problem of white overrepresentation in medicine and research here.

Even within my own family, I saw the difference in available information about our past.

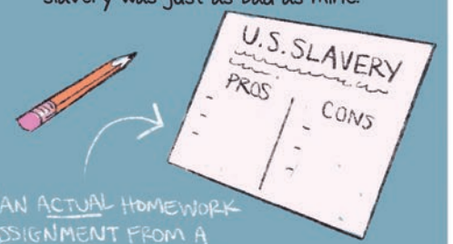


In 2004, my father, after just a few months of researching free public records, had created a genealogical tree of nearly 1,000 family members ranging from Russia and Norway to France and Ireland.

On my mom's side, I know that my great-grandmother was born into a sharecropping home and was helping pick cotton with the family at age four.

I can only trace her side back five generations before last names disappear.

I want to be able to skip the part where I explain why this is. But if you're U.S. American like me, I imagine your public school coverage of chattel slavery was just as bad as mine.



(AN ACTUAL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT FROM A NATIONALLY DISTRIBUTED TEXTBOOK)

So for your convenience:

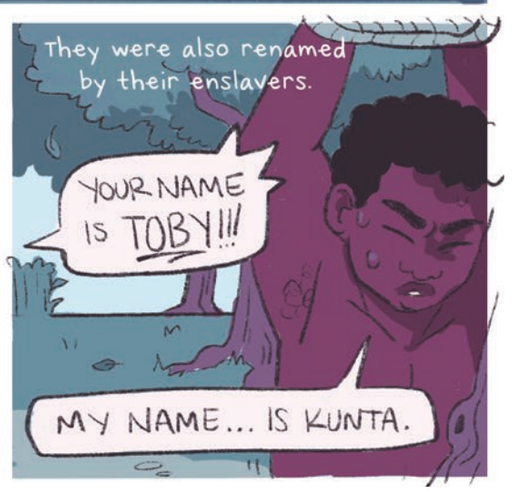
REASONS IT'S HARD for BLACKS to TRACE THEIR ROOTS

Though nearly 13 million Africans were kidnapped and packed into slaving ships headed to the Americas, only 400-500,000 were estimated to have stepped foot in the USA.

The people in those boats were strategically mixed by language and tribe so the chances of cooperation to escape or overthrow the ship were minimized.

The newly enslaved were not allowed to speak their native language nor observe their tribal traditions (except in rare cases such as the Gullah people).

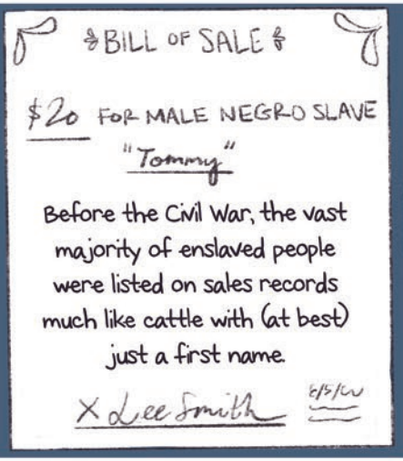
They were also renamed by their enslavers.



So how did barely half a million Africans become 4 million by 1860?

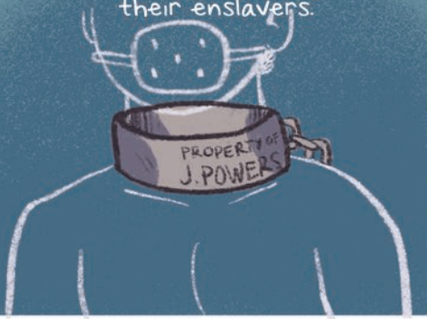
Though consensual marriages for slaves existed on some properties, most were forcefully "bred" to sustain the industries that made the U.S. the global superpower that it is today.

The rape of enslaved African women by white enslavers was not only a reinforcement of power and ownership, it was the cheaper alternative to purchasing more slaves at the auction block.



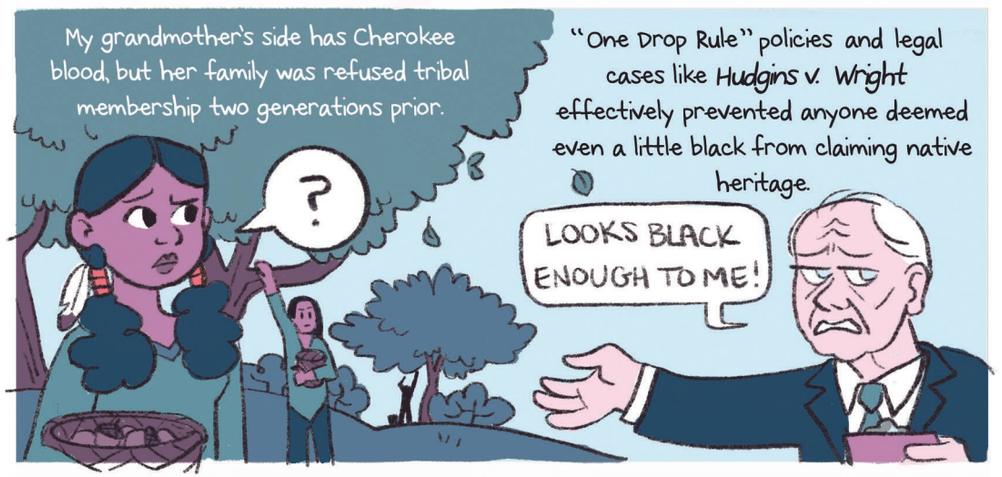
The lighter children of these forced pregnancies were rarely claimed, further blurring genealogical roots.

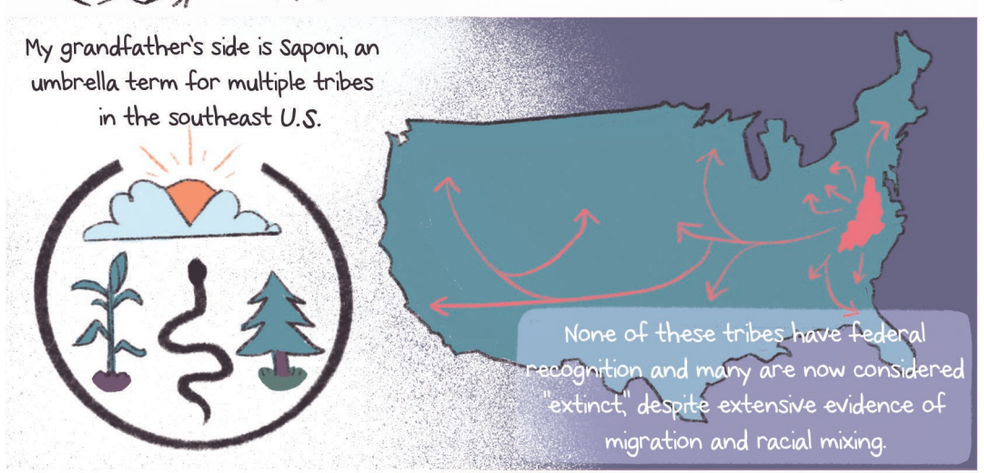
Once chattel slavery was legally abolished in 1863, freed peoples were given the last names of their enslavers.



Enslaved people were forbidden from reading and writing, and laws made it so anyone found teaching them would be severely punished, making it nearly impossible for families to keep records of their own.

I could just as easily talk about the difficulties in tracing my native ancestry, for which I only have a few documents, oral histories, the features of my ancestors.
and the first name of the woman with long, dark hair who birthed my great-grandfather and then seemingly disappeared.

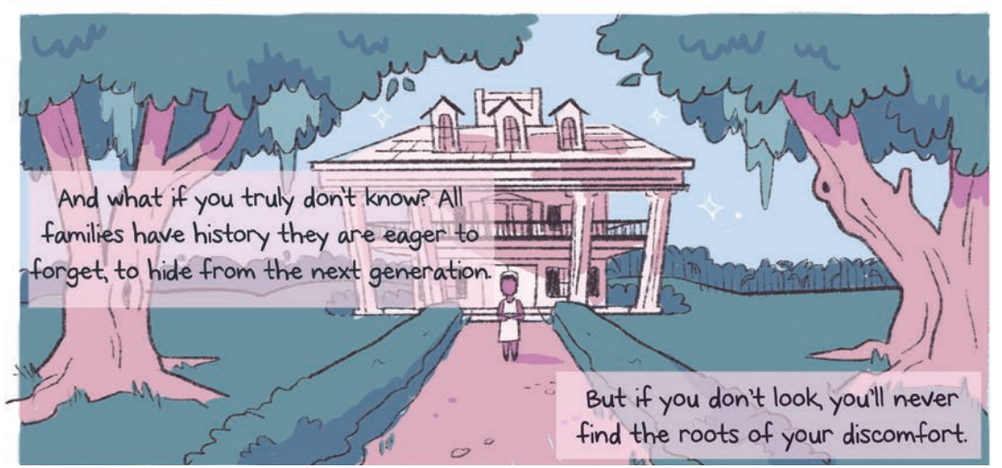

My grandmother's side has Cherokee blood, but her family was refused tribal membership two generations prior.
?
"One Drop Rule" policies and legal cases like *Hudgins v. Wright* effectively prevented anyone deemed even a little black from claiming native heritage.
LOOKS BLACK ENOUGH TO ME!


My grandfather's side is Saponi, an umbrella term for multiple tribes in the southeast U.S.
None of these tribes have federal recognition and many are now considered "extinct," despite extensive evidence of migration and racial mixing.

I couldn't stop thinking about Katie. Despite the sickening implications of rape and enslavement, knowing if the connection was real could help me trace my mother's family tree further back than any DNA test ever could.

But after tentatively trying to reopen the conversation, this is all I got:
Sorry. I don't recognize those names.
With so little information, I couldn't draw any conclusions.

But I can't help but think: Were you really telling the truth, Katie?
If you know something I don't, and if it is what I think it is, you don't have to feel guilty.
You aren't responsible for what your great-great-great-grandfathers may or may not have done.


And what if you truly don't know? All families have history they are eager to forget, to hide from the next generation.
But if you don't look, you'll never find the roots of your discomfort.

I can't help but see this situation reflected in our country as a whole.

The core of our problem is the inability to accept the dark circumstances that allowed the U.S. to exist as it is today.

9.
10.
11.

CHAPTER 12: SLAVERY

"While there were cruel masters who maimed or even killed their slaves (although killing and maiming were against the law in every state), there were also kind and generous owners... a few [slaves] never felt the lash. Many may not have even been terribly unhappy with their lot, for they knew no other."

A slave and his master just hanging out! South Carolina, 1843

FROM AN ACTUAL TEXTBOOK IN TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL CIRCULATION FOR 10 YEARS

142

The desperation is found in every level of our culture: from law to our children's textbooks, to mask and candy-coat a history of genocide and a brutally enforced racial hierarchy.

RIGHTS WOULD BE A NICE START!

BLACK LIVES MATTER

These attempts to repress the collective memory out of some sort of fear that if those affected were to know, we would want... what, exactly? Revenge? Reparations? Rights?

I don't see much difference between Katie and my birth country.

INBOX
U.S.A.
ONLINE

Just tell me what you know!

Don't you understand that sharing your knowledge has the power to heal?

That once harm is acknowledged and the work to undo it begins, we can finally build something good for everyone?

seen

sigh

But power is never given willingly by those who possess it.

ANYONE NEED SOME HELP?

So I'll just keep digging.

Stay Home, Read Comics.

Need some reading material for the pandemic?
Visit our online bookstore for back issues of *The Nib* magazine and
a slew of nonfiction comics and graphic novels curated by our editors.
Stock up on comics, not toilet paper at ***thenib.com/books.***

The New Collection from Matt Bors

The Nib Magazine

Our New Anthology of Queer Comics

Illustration by Vreni Stollberger

PECKING ORDER

THE LONG-NURTURED **SEEDS** OF OUR NATION'S CURRENT **EXISTENTIAL CRISIS** WERE GROWN IN UNLIKELY SUBCULTURES AND CONSUMER GROUPS —

IN **COMICS FANDOM**, WARNING SIGNS OF THIS CRISIS HID IN **PLAIN SIGHT.**

IN THE SAFE HAVEN OF FAN CULTURE, WHAT SEPARATES THE **MISFIT** FROM THE **MISANTHROPE**?

by NATE POWELL

I'D ALWAYS CONSIDERED COSPLAYERS A TOLERABLE NUISANCE AS I SOLD BOOKS AT COMIC CONS. FOR YEARS I'D NEVER REALLY GIVEN THEM MUCH THOUGHT OR CONTEXT—

JUST DIFFERENT EVOLUTIONARY STRAINS ON THE FAMILY TREE.

IN 2011 OR SO, I SNEAKED SOME FRIENDS FROM THE MUSICAL SIDE OF MY LIFE INTO A CON, GUIDING THEM THROUGH THE POP CIRCUS ACCORDING TO MY OWN NARROW, SELF-AFFIRMING RANGE OF INTERESTS.

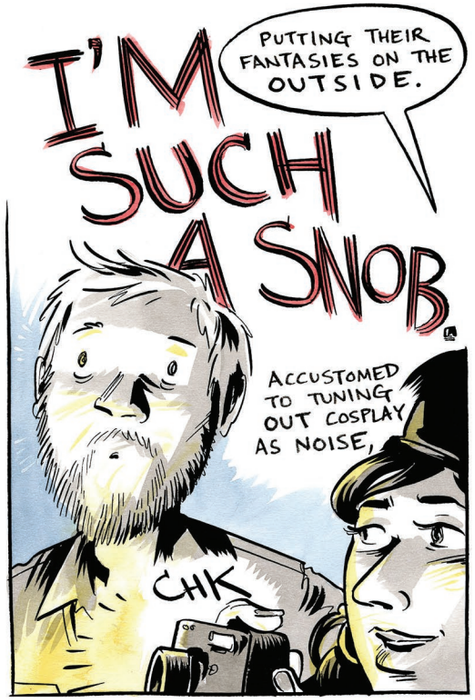
I IMMEDIATELY FELT EMBARRASSED, BETRAYING HOW **COMFORTABLE** THIS COMMUNITY HAD ALWAYS MADE ME FEEL—

AS IF TEENAGE FRIENDS HAD STUMBLED ACROSS SENTIMENTAL TOYS KEPT IN THE CLOSET,

I PROJECTED MY OWN JUDGMENTS ABOUT CERTAIN NERDS,

NAKED AND UGLY,

TO "OTHER" THEM AND DISTANCE MYSELF.



IT TOOK EFFORT TO SEE COSPLAY AS IT IS — A PARALLEL SUBCULTURE BUILT ON PARTICIPATION, CREATIVITY, OPENNESS, INCLUSION.

ALL CORE VALUES OF MINE.

GUIDED BY THIS REVELATION, THANKS TO MY FRIENDS' OPENNESS, THE GLOW CARRIED ME AS LONG AS IT COULD UNTIL THE INEVITABLE

KLOP KLOP
YEP, IT'S

KLOP KLOP
THAT GUY.

SELF-SATISFIED, LIKE A 13-YEAR-OLD WEARING A SLAYER SHIRT TO CHURCH, ACCOMPANIED BY LESSER VILLAINS AND MOUTH-BREATHERS,
KLOP KLOP
SWADDLED IN THE MYTH OF (WHAT I PRAY IS) SOME MEDIA PROPERTY. (HEINLEIN? DICK? TARANTINO? DOES THAT MAKE IT ANY BETTER?)

IT TAKES A MINUTE TO PROCESS— I MEAN, I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING, JUST LIKE I ALREADY KNOW HOW THIS IS GONNA PLAY OUT.
SO DOES HE.
I JUST NEED TO GO OVER AND ASK HIM.

EVEN JUST HAND-WRINGING, THOUGH, I'M RELIEVED TO SEE I'M NOT ALONE—

THIS IS REAL, IT IS WEIRD, AND OTHERS SEE IT, TOO.
EXCUSE ME—

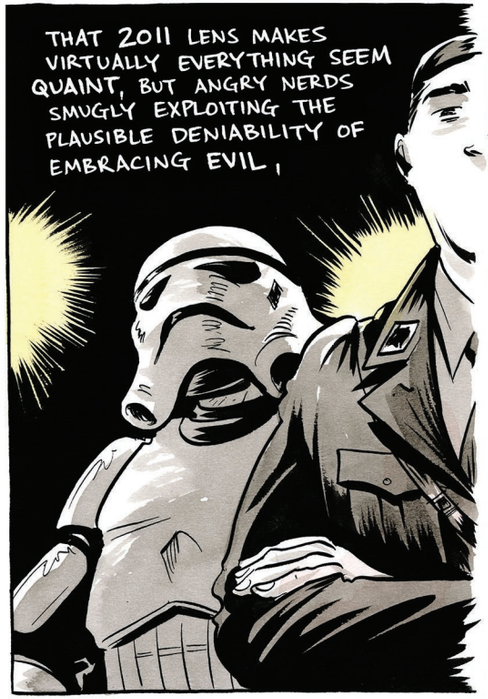
WHY ARE YOU WEARING A NAZI UNIFORM?
huh?

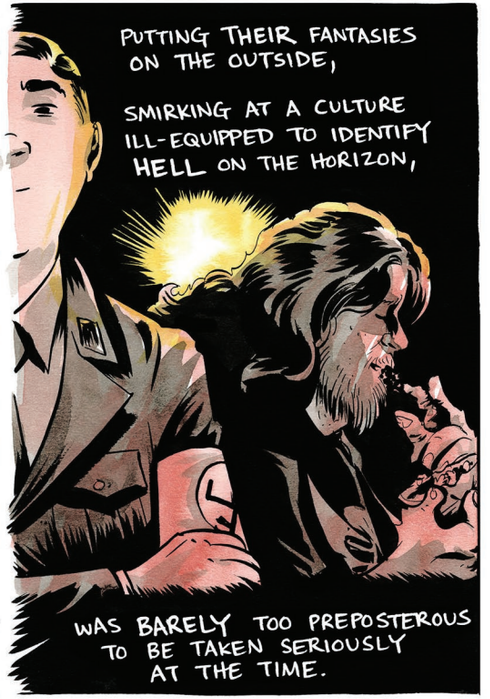
YOUR UNIFORM.
THE SWASTIKA.
WHY ARE YOU WEARING A NAZI UNIFORM?

it's...

it's characters.
HHH-TSHH

THIS IS NOT A COSTUME— THIS IS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED.





I DIDN'T SPEAK UP
BECAUSE I COULD AFFORD
NOT TO DO SO

IN THAT FINAL WINDOW
OF PASSING OFF AGGRIEVED
PROVOCATION

AS POOR JUDGMENT,

DISMISSING CRYSTALLIZING POOLS
OF RESENTFUL WHITE MEN

AS MERE BASEMENT DWELLERS.

FROM NIB CONTRIBUTING EDITOR AND NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR ANDY WARNER

"Warner's work honors the richness of Lebanon and the fragile, fleeting nature of peace." —PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

"AN EVOCATIVE MEMOIR that sits at the intersection of the personal and the political." —JOE SACCO, author of Footnotes in Gaza

"HIGHLY CHARGED." —KIRKUS REVIEWS (Starred Review)

AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD
ST. MARTIN'S GRIFFIN

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States at a moment when the wealth divide was at record levels: millions of people living paycheck to paycheck, uninsured and unhoused, in a country that is home to the most billionaires in the world. Created in collaboration with ***Reveal from The Center for Investigative Reporting****, In/Vulnerable captures both the shared experience of the pandemic and the ways it has laid bare the stark disparities that shape our lives.*

IN/VULNERABLE

Illustrations by Thi Bui

Interviews by Laura C. Morel, Mallory Newman, David Ritsher, and Anayansi Diaz-Cortes

Scripts by Sarah Mirk and Amanda Pike

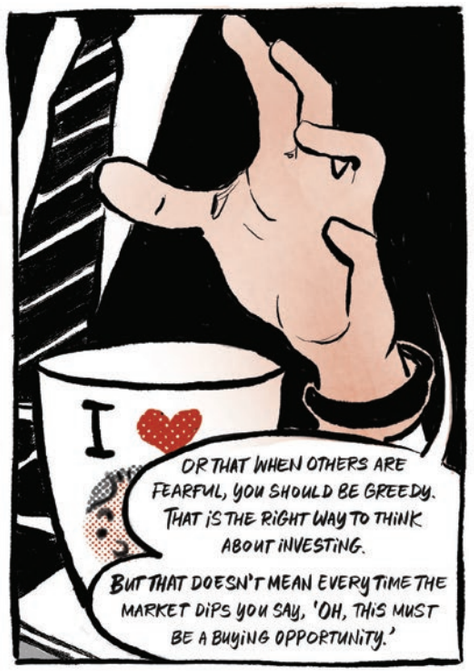
Reveal
from The Center for Investigative Reporting

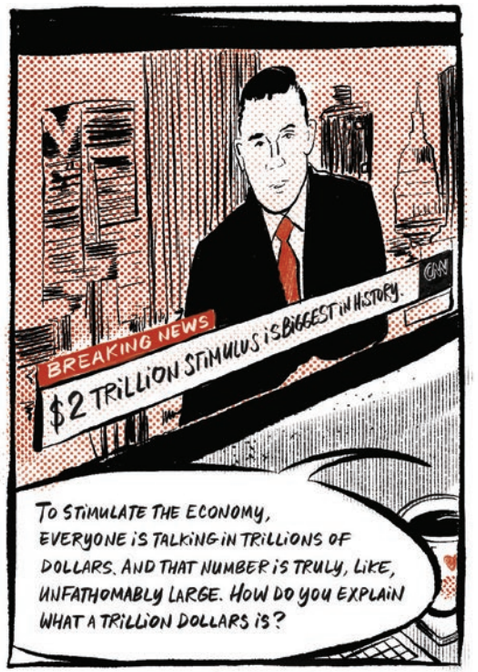
IN/VULNERABLE

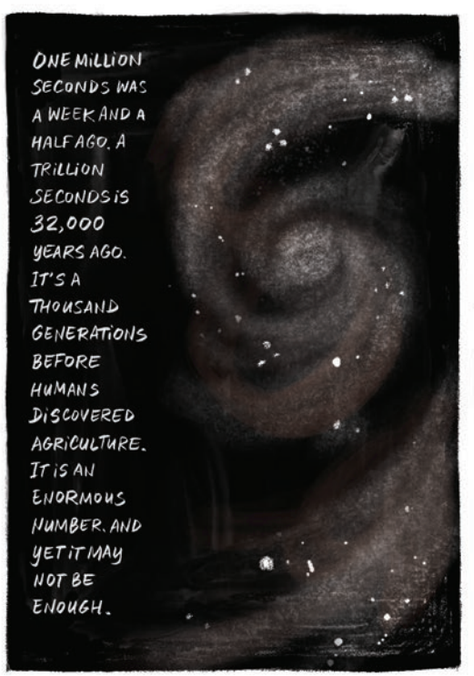
INTERVIEW BY/LAURA C. MOREL

IN/VULNERABLE

INTERVIEW BY/MALLORY NEWMAN







IN/VULNERABLE

INTERVIEW BY/DAVID RITSHER

JAMISON WILLIAMS; FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

IN/VULNERABLE

INTERVIEW BY/ANAYANSI DIAZ-CORTES

RE-ORGANIZE

THE DECLINE OF UNIONS HAS LED TO PROTEST MOVEMENTS WITHOUT TEETH. BUT STRIKES AND CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS ARE ON THE RISE.

BY SOPHIE YANOW

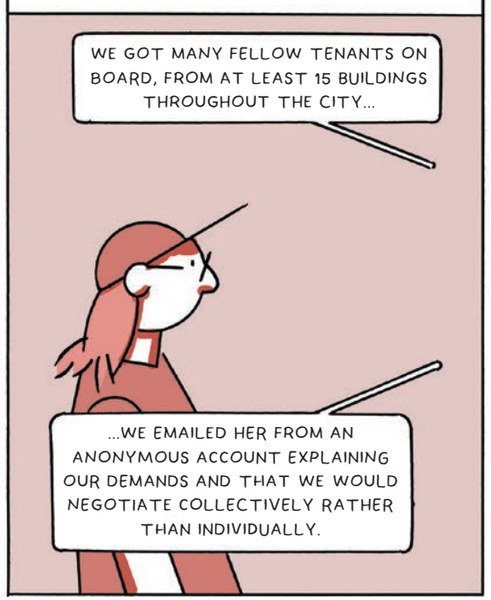
IN THE SUMMER OF 2019, I ATTENDED A DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA MEETING NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WHERE MEMBERS OF **TENANT AND NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS** (TANC) HELD AN EDUCATIONAL SESSION.

TANC'S MISSION IS TO HELP TENANTS ORGANIZE TOWARDS RENT REDUCTION AND TIMELY MAINTENANCE AS WELL AS TO END LANDLORD HARASSMENT, AMONG OTHER THINGS.

NUMEROUS HOPEFULS PUT THEIR ENERGY INTO ORGANIZING FOR THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST CANDIDATE BERNIE SANDERS, BUT I'M WARY OF ELECTORALISM AS THE MOST EFFECTIVE VEHICLE FOR CHANGE.

MANY FACTIONS FURTHER LEFT OF SANDERS, FROM SOCIALISTS TO ANARCHISTS, BELIEVE THAT THE CHANGE SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCATES SEEK WILL NOT COME FROM WHO IS IN POWER, BUT FROM WORKERS, TENANTS, STUDENTS, AND THE GENERAL POPULACE...

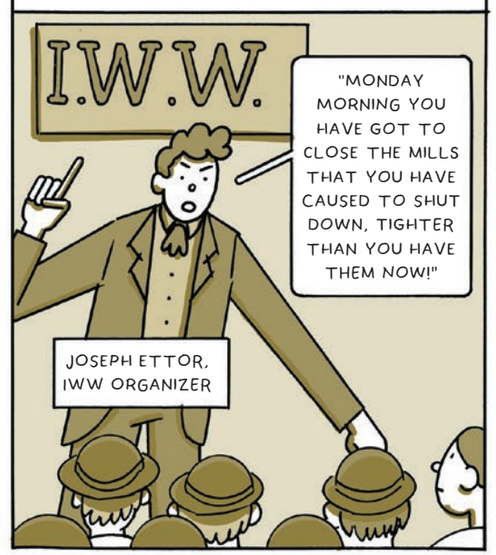
...LEVERAGING THEIR COLLECTIVE POWER IN STRIKES, BOYCOTTS, AND OTHER MEANS OF DISRUPTION.



IN RECENT YEARS IN THE U.S. WE'VE SEEN MASS PROTEST MOVEMENTS THAT RESULTED IN LITTLE GOVERNMENT ACTION. BUT ARE PRESIDENTS THE REAL DRIVERS FOR RADICAL REFORMS? OR DOES COLLECTIVE ACTION HAVE A BIGGER EFFECT, REGARDLESS OF WHO IS IN POWER?

THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY WAS RIFE WITH COLLECTIVE ACTION. IN 1919, OVER 4 MILLION WORKERS IN THE U.S. (25% OF ALL PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES) WENT ON STRIKE.

WORKERS ORGANIZED THEMSELVES, BUT SOCIALIST GROUPS AND ANARCHISTS LIKE THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD WERE ALSO ACTIVE, AND HELPED WORKERS SECURE AID AND PLAN TACTICS.



SOMETIMES A STRIKE WOULD BE PUT DOWN WITH VIOLENCE VIA HIRED ENFORCERS OR THE NATIONAL GUARD, BUT OFTEN WORKERS WON THEIR DEMANDS.

IN THE 1920S, STRIKE ACTIVITY DROPPED SEVERELY, POSSIBLY DUE TO INCREASED ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND A NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN THAT IMPLIED UNIONS WERE LINKED TO THE RECENT "RED" BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION.

THEN, IN 1929, THE STOCK MARKET CRASHED.

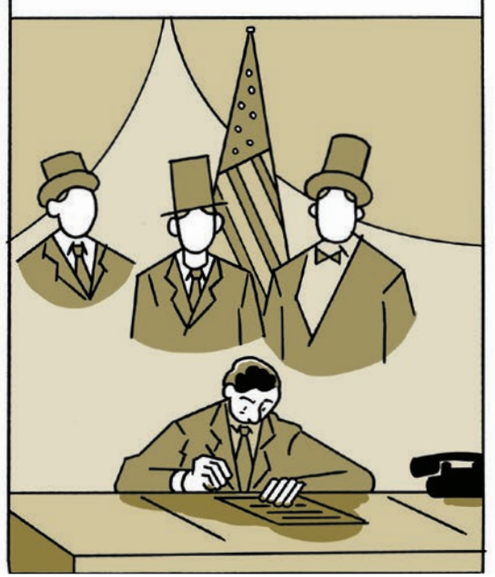
IN 1932, AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION, DEMOCRAT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT RAN FOR PRESIDENT.

THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM PROMISED UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE, PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS AND (IMPORTANTLY) THE REPEAL OF PROHIBITION.

ACCORDING TO HISTORIAN HOWARD ZINN, ROOSEVELT'S PRIMARY GOAL WAS "TO REORGANIZE CAPITALISM IN SUCH A WAY AS TO OVERCOME THE CRISIS AND STABILIZE THE SYSTEM."

HIS CAMPAIGN WAS CHAMPIONED BY WEALTHY NEWSPAPER BUSINESSMAN WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST. HE WON.

ROOSEVELT ASSUMED OFFICE IN 1933, AND HIS FIRST MAJOR LEGISLATION WAS A BILL CRAFTED TO SERVE BIG BUSINESS, WITH UNENFORCEABLE LIP SERVICE TO WORKERS.



BUT THAT SAME YEAR, STRIKE ACTIVITY SWIFTLY ROSE TOWARD THE 1919 PEAK. ALL MANNER OF GROUPS OUTSIDE THE ELITES ORGANIZED ON CLASS LINES, INCLUDING TENANTS AND THE UNEMPLOYED.

IN TOLEDO, ONE FAMED STRIKE SAW 10 THOUSAND AUTO WORKERS WALK OUT FOR BETTER WAGES. THE UNEMPLOYED ORGANIZED AND PICKETED ALONGSIDE THEM.

WHEN THE NATIONAL GUARD WAS CALLED, STRIKERS EDUCATED THEM ABOUT THEIR ROLE AS STRIKEBREAKERS.

SOME GUARDSMEN BECAME SYMPATHETIC; STRIKERS FOUGHT THE REMAINING GUARD USING WHAT TODAY WE MIGHT CALL "GUERRILLA TACTICS" AND FORCED THEIR RETREAT.

THE WORKERS WON THEIR DEMANDS.

SOCIOLOGISTS JENKINS AND BRENTS CONTEND THAT "AN EXPANDING PROTEST WAVE CREATED SUFFICIENT ECONOMIC DISRUPTIONS AND POLITICAL VOLATILITY THAT THE POLITICAL LEADERS BECAME CONVINCED OF AN EMERGING POLITICAL CRISIS, THEREBY PLACING SOCIAL REFORMS ON THE NATIONAL POLITICAL AGENDA."

THE YEAR AFTER THE STRIKE WAVE, THE ROOSEVELT ADMINISTRATION PASSED THE WAGNER ACT, ENFORCING THE EARLIER NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT THAT HAD ENABLED COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.

THIS WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE PASSING OF POLICIES WE REMEMBER ROOSEVELT FOR TODAY: HUGE PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS AND THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.

BY THE TIME OF ROOSEVELT'S RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN, HEARST HAD RESCINDED SUPPORT AND TAKEN TO SMEARING HIM IN HIS PAPERS.

MARK SHIELDS, COLUMNIST AND FORMER DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN MANAGER, (WASHINGTON POST, 8/4/96)

NOAM CHOMSKY, LINGUIST, PHILOSOPHER, POLITICAL ACTIVIST, (HUFFINGTON POST 2/21/14)

POLITICAL SCIENTIST MICHAEL GOLDFIELD LIKENS THE '60S, FILLED WITH SIT-INS, BOYCOTTS, DRAFT DODGING, ECONOMIC DISRUPTION, AND VOTER VOLATILITY, TO THE '30S. REFORMS WERE FORCED ON THE TABLE AGAIN.

REPUBLICAN RICHARD NIXON TOOK THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE IN JANUARY 1969.

MLK HAD BEEN ASSASSINATED IN THE SPRING OF 1968; RIOTS HAD ENSUED AND AGITATION FROM THE MILITANT LEFT HAD CONTINUED.

PARTS OF ORGANIZED LABOR WERE THEN ENGAGED IN A FIGHT FOR FEDERALLY BACKED WORKER SAFETY COMPENSATION, WITH THE UNITED STEELWORKERS LEADING LOBBYING EFFORTS.

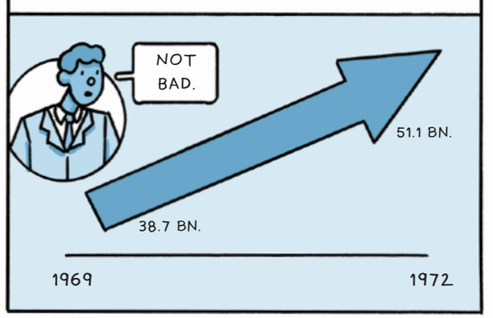
IN NIXON'S FIRST MONTH IN OFFICE, MEMBERS OF THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA STAGED MASSIVE WILDCAT STRIKES* THAT DISRUPTED COAL MINING IN OHIO, PENNSYLVANIA, AND WEST VIRGINIA TO DEMAND COMPENSATION FOR BLACK LUNG DISEASE.

*STRIKES WITHOUT UNION LEADERSHIP

MEANWHILE PROTESTS AGAINST THE VIETNAM WAR WERE ESCALATING. THE 1969 MORATORIUM TO END THE WAR ON VIETNAM, ORIGINALLY A CALL FOR A GENERAL STRIKE, WAS A MASS NATIONWIDE DEMONSTRATION FOLLOWED BY A MARCH IN D.C.

NIXON WROTE IN HIS MEMOIRS: "ALTHOUGH PUBLICLY I CONTINUED TO IGNORE THE RAGING ANTIWAR CONTROVERSY... I KNEW, HOWEVER, THAT AFTER ALL THE PROTESTS AND THE MORATORIUM, AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION WOULD BE SERIOUSLY DIVIDED BY ANY MILITARY ESCALATION OF THE WAR."

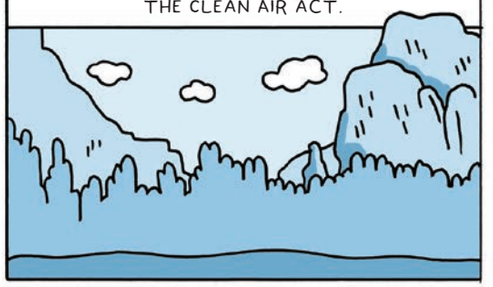
NIXON WAS NOTORIOUSLY RACIST, BUT A YEAR AFTER THE MLK RIOTS, HE CREATED AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION QUOTA SYSTEM THAT LED TOTAL BLACK INCOME TO RISE 32% FROM 1969 TO 1972.



IN APRIL 1970, THE UNITED AUTO WORKERS HELPED FUND THE FIRST EARTH DAY AND PRINTED AND MAILED ALL OF THE MATERIALS FOR THE EVENT.

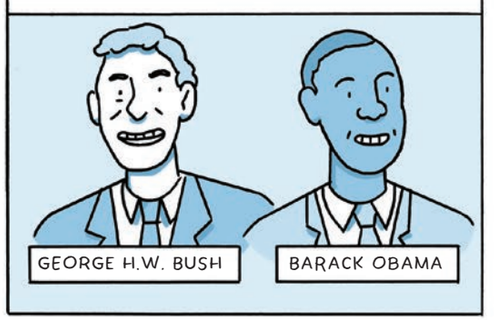
BY THE END OF THE YEAR, 4.7% OF ALL WORKERS HAD GONE ON STRIKE, AROUND 2.5 MILLION PEOPLE.

BEFORE TAKING OFFICE, NIXON HAD ZERO RECORD OF CONSERVATION, LET ALONE ENVIRONMENTALISM, BUT IN THE FINAL MONTH OF 1970, HE CREATED THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY THROUGH EXECUTIVE ORDER AND SIGNED THE CLEAN AIR ACT.

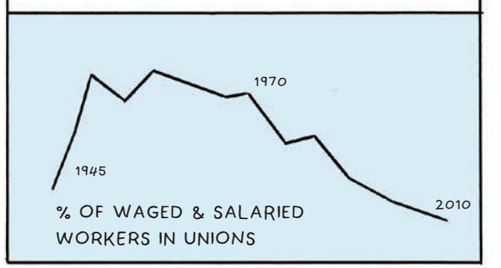


HE ALSO SIGNED THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT, WHICH CREATED THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.

IT'S TRUE THAT NIXON PRESIDED OVER A DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS, BUT MORE RECENT PRESIDENTS HAVE FACED THE SAME WITHOUT PASSING OR WRITING EQUIVALENT REFORMS INTO LAW.



WHAT MAY HAVE MARKED THE END OF LIBERALISM IN THE U.S. WAS THE COLLAPSE OF AN IMPORTANT PRESENCE IN PROTEST COALITIONS: UNIONS. IN THE MID-1970S, UNION MEMBERSHIP RATES PLUMMETED, THANKS IN PART TO "RIGHT-TO-WORK" BILLS.



RIGHT-TO-WORK LAWS AROSE IN 1947 AND SLOWLY BECAME MORE PREVALENT. THEY PROHIBIT UNIONS FROM NEGOTIATING CONTRACTS WHERE ALL MEMBERS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PAY DUES, CUTTING INTO ORGANIZING FUNDS.

COLLECTIVE ACTION IN THE WORKPLACE HAD BEEN CODIFIED, THEN PROTECTED BY THE STATE, AND THEN SLOWLY WHITTLED AWAY.

WITH THE LEFT DISMANTLED AND LABOR ON THE DOWNSWING, PROTEST MOVEMENTS IN THE LATE 20TH AND EARLY 21ST CENTURY MAY HAVE LOST MUCH OF THEIR LEVERAGE, AND WITH IT, THEIR POWER TO REFORM.

I WENT TO THE BIG PROTESTS... WHAT WAS THE POINT?

YET IN RECENT YEARS, PRO-LEFT SENTIMENT HAS BEEN ON THE UPSWING, AND IN 2018 THERE WERE MORE PEOPLE ON STRIKE IN THE U.S. THAN ANY YEAR SINCE 1986.

IN 2018, TEACHERS IN WEST VIRGINIA, OKLAHOMA, COLORADO, KENTUCKY AND ARIZONA ORGANIZED WILD CAT STRIKES FOR BETTER WAGES AND SMALLER CLASS SIZES.

OUR LEADERSHIP ISN'T MILITANT ENOUGH. WE NEED TO STRIKE.

IN 2020, UNIONIZING IS BEGINNING TO INCREASE AGAIN IN CALIFORNIA. AND ONCE AGAIN UNIONS ARE MAKING DEMANDS NOT JUST FOR THEMSELVES.

LOVE IT! IMPROVE IT! MEDICARE FOR ALL!

AND PEOPLE ARE ORGANIZING THEMSELVES OUTSIDE THE CONFINES OF WHAT THE STATE RECOGNIZES.

AREN'T YOU WORRIED THAT LANDLORDS WILL FIND OUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING?

IF ORGANIZING CAN SECURE WAGE INCREASES, STAVE OFF RENT INCREASES, AND POSSIBLY BRING ABOUT REFORMS IN THE WAKE OF ALL THIS...

NOT REALLY... MOST OF THEM DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS...

IF LANDLORDS FIND OUT WHAT WE'RE DOING AND THEY'RE SCARED OF US, THAT MEANS WE HAVE POWER.

"ZOLSIA," TANC ORGANIZER

...THEN I'D LIKE TO GET ORGANIZED.

WE DON'T THINK OF OURSELVES AS "ORGANIZING THE PEOPLE."

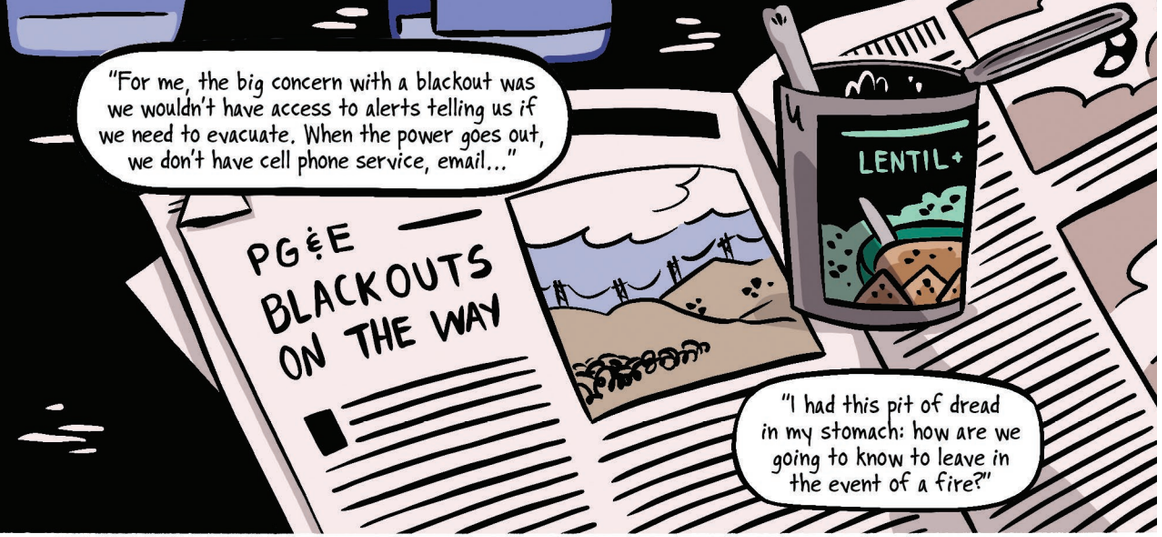
IN MARCH 2020 I DECIDED TO BECOME A DUES-PAYING MEMBER OF TANC. WE'LL SEE WHERE IT GOES.

WE ARE THE PEOPLE, ORGANIZING OURSELVES.

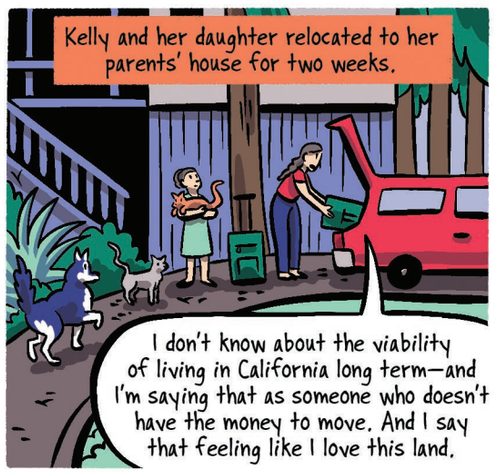
POWER LESS

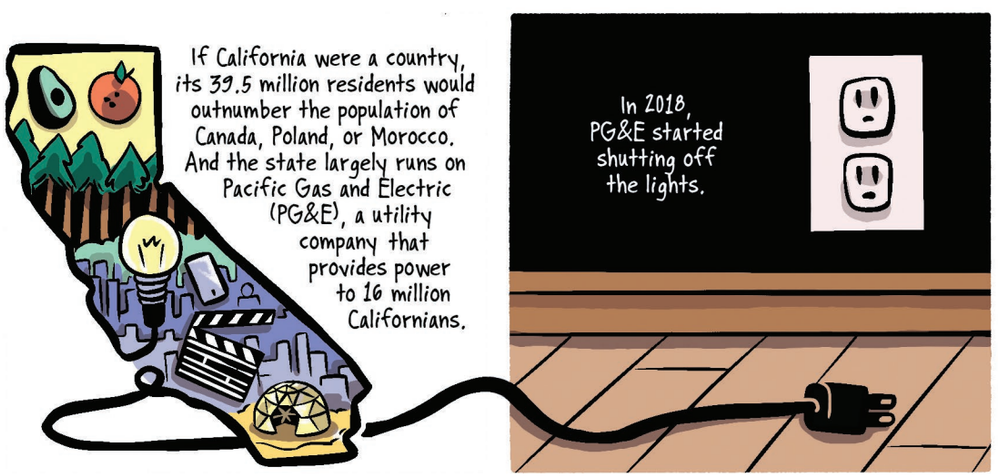
WRITTEN BY
VRENI STOLLBERGER
AND SARAH MIRK

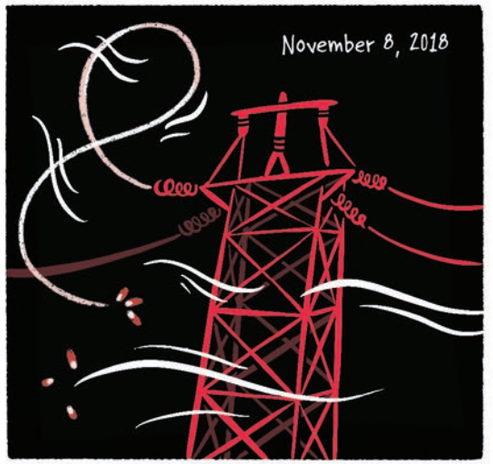
ART BY
JOYCE RICE


"For me, the big concern with a blackout was we wouldn't have access to alerts telling us if we need to evacuate. When the power goes out, we don't have cell phone service, email..."
PG&E BLACKOUTS ON THE WAY
LENTIL+
"I had this pit of dread in my stomach: how are we going to know to leave in the event of a fire?"

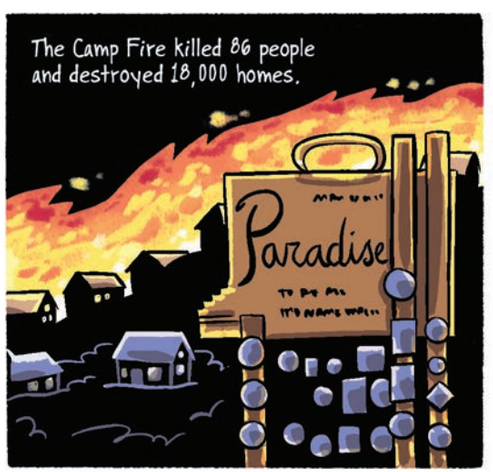
I just made the decision to evacuate.
And as we were evacuating, the power went out.
Kelly Gray, mother and artist, Camp Meeker, California


Kelly and her daughter relocated to her parents' house for two weeks.
I don't know about the viability of living in California long term—and I'm saying that as someone who doesn't have the money to move. And I say that feeling like I love this land.

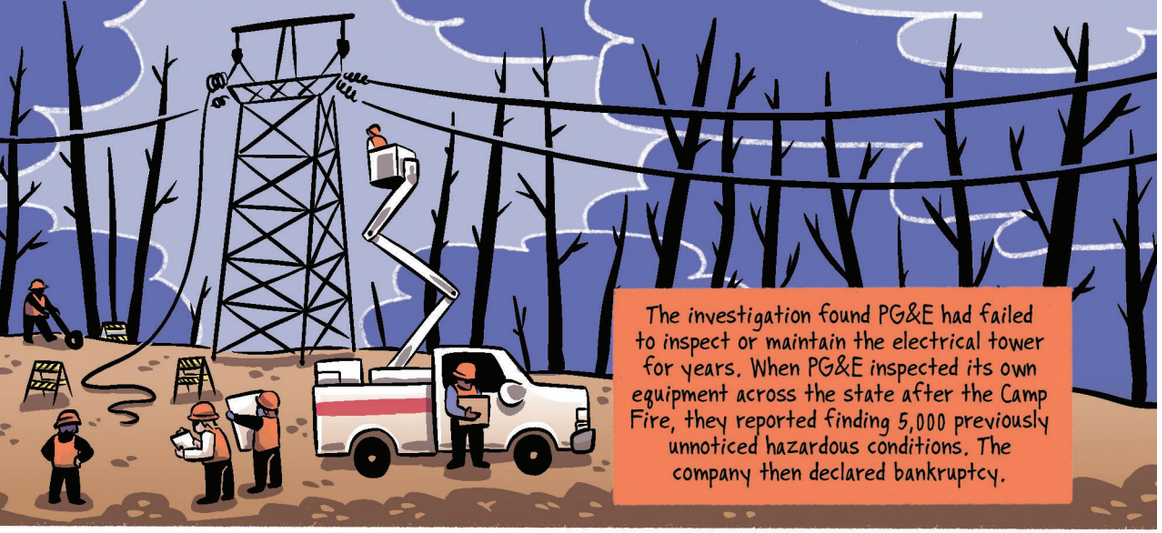

If California were a country, its 39.5 million residents would outnumber the population of Canada, Poland, or Morocco. And the state largely runs on Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), a utility company that provides power to 16 million Californians.
In 2018, PG&E started shutting off the lights.

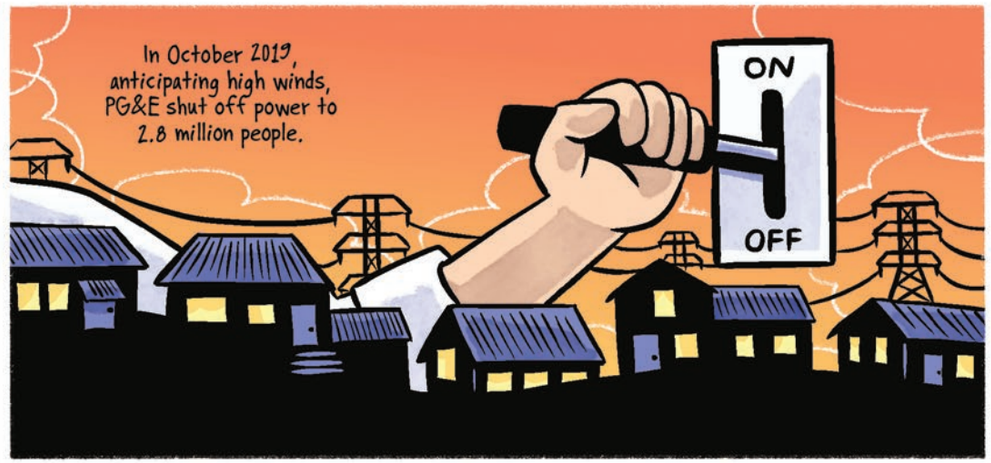

November 8, 2018

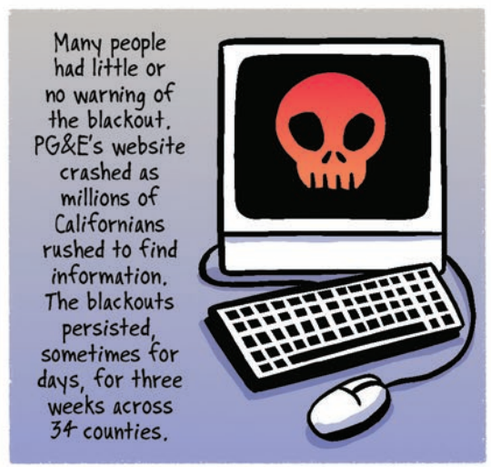
A faulty PG&E power line ignited what would become the deadliest wildfire in California history: the Camp Fire.


The Camp Fire killed 86 people and destroyed 18,000 homes.
Paradise

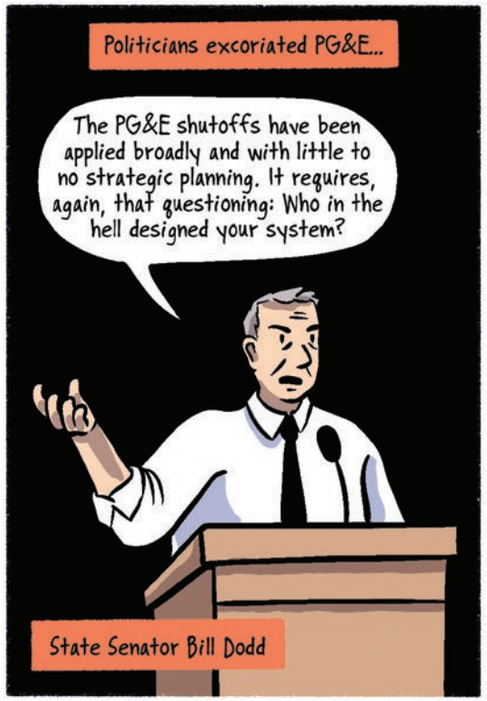
Fire is a natural part of California's ecology. But state investigators found that the Camp Fire was not caused by nature—it was started by PG&E.







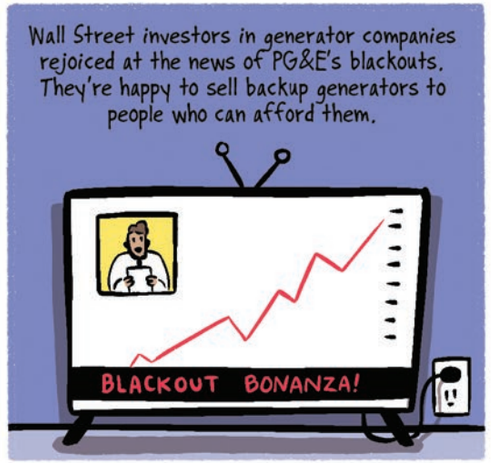
*"How California Blackouts Are Impacting People With Disabilities," Here & Now, WBUR


Politicians excoriated PG&E...
The PG&E shutoffs have been applied broadly and with little to no strategic planning. It requires, again, that questioning: Who in the hell designed your system?
State Senator Bill Dodd

... and, in the dark, some bigger problems became clear.
It's about dog-eat-dog capitalism meeting climate change. It's about corporate greed meeting climate change.
California Governor Gavin Newsom

Forest fires aren't going away. With the warming planet, they will get worse.
GR
GRR
GRR

California's experiences show who will pay the steepest costs of the climate crisis.

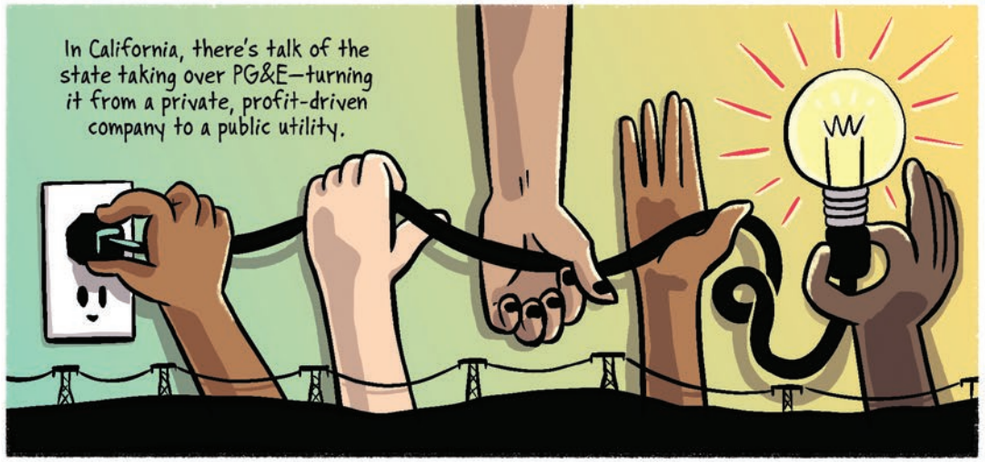

Wall Street investors in generator companies rejoiced at the news of PG&E's blackouts. They're happy to sell backup generators to people who can afford them.
BLACKOUT BONANZA!

Wealthy people also shell out for private firefighting forces...

...and can more easily bear the costs of evacuation and relocation.

Meanwhile, on the front lines of the Camp Fire were 500 incarcerated people who work as firefighters—and are paid as little as $1 a day.

While actively fighting a fire, the incarcerated firefighters are paid a bonus of an additional $1 an hour.


In California, there's talk of the state taking over PG&E—turning it from a private, profit-driven company to a public utility.

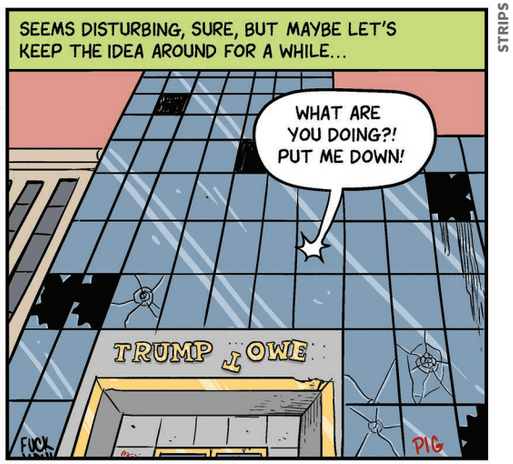
HOLLYWOOD
But right now, the future for the country's most populous state looks patchy: PG&E has said blackouts will likely continue for the next ten years.

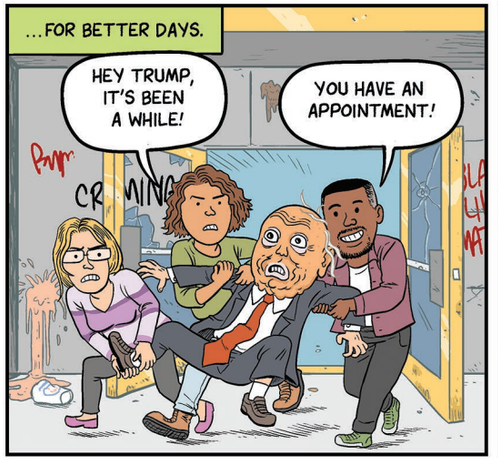
HOLLYWOOD
What will the world look like by then?

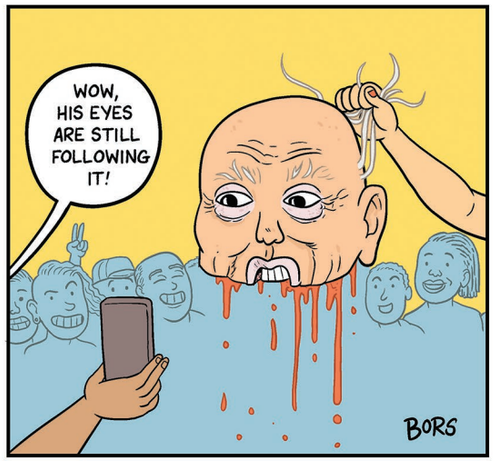
CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR THE 1 PERCENT

Charis JB

Matt Bors

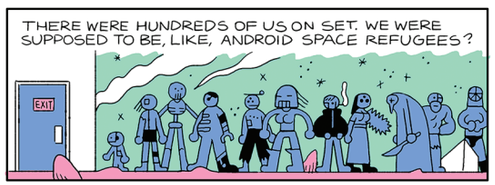






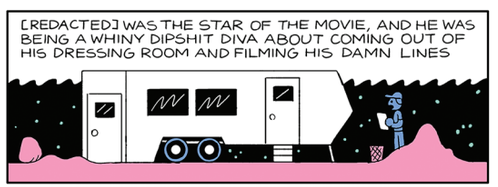
"ON SET"

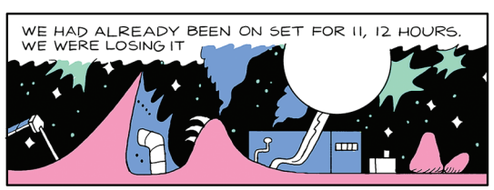
A FEW SUMMERS AGO, I DID SOME WORK AS AN EXTRA. I WAS IN SOME SORT OF SCI-FI EPIC.


THERE WERE HUNDREDS OF US ON SET. WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE, LIKE, ANDROID SPACE REFUGEES?
EXIT

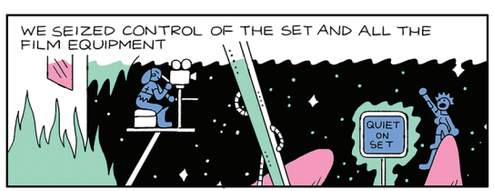
WE HAD DUMB OUTFITS ON AND SOME CLUNKY PLASTIC TECHNO SHIT GLUED TO OUR FACES

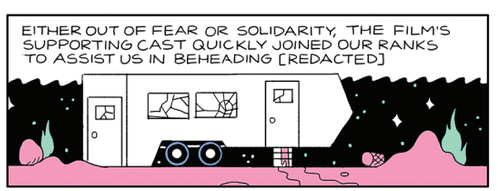
THE SHOOT WAS GOING LONG. WE WERE ALL STARVING. DUE TO SOME MIX-UP, CRAFT SERVICES DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TO FEED US ALL

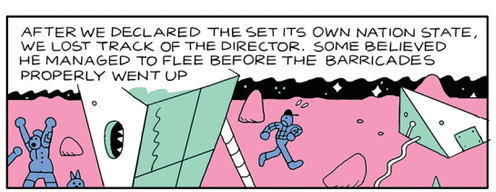

[REDACTED] WAS THE STAR OF THE MOVIE, AND HE WAS BEING A WHINY DIPSHIT DIVA ABOUT COMING OUT OF HIS DRESSING ROOM AND FILMING HIS DAMN LINES


WE HAD ALREADY BEEN ON SET FOR 11, 12 HOURS. WE WERE LOSING IT

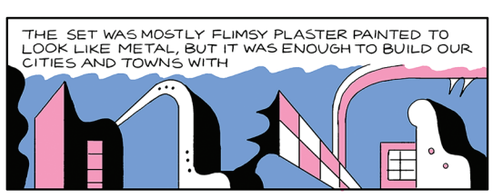
A FEW OF US TRIED TO LEAVE, BUT A P.A. TOLD US THEY'D WITHHOLD OUR PAY IF WE WALKED OFF BEFORE SHOOTING FINISHED. THEN THE RIOT STARTED

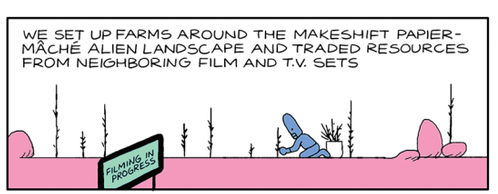

WE SEIZED CONTROL OF THE SET AND ALL THE FILM EQUIPMENT
QUIET ON SET

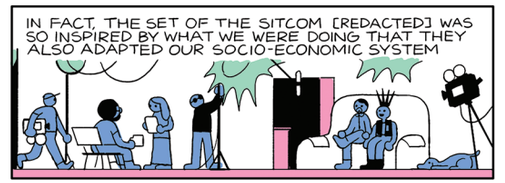

EITHER OUT OF FEAR OR SOLIDARITY, THE FILM'S SUPPORTING CAST QUICKLY JOINED OUR RANKS TO ASSIST US IN BEHEADING [REDACTED]

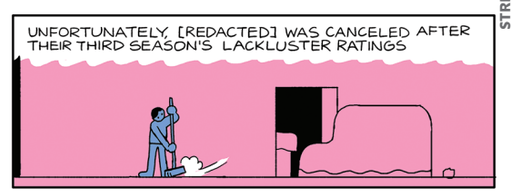

AFTER WE DECLARED THE SET ITS OWN NATION STATE, WE LOST TRACK OF THE DIRECTOR. SOME BELIEVED HE MANAGED TO FLEE BEFORE THE BARRICADES PROPERLY WENT UP

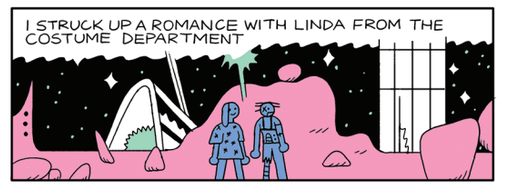
THERE HAD BEEN SOME RUMORS THAT HE SNUCK INTO HAIR AND MAKEUP IN ORDER TO FASHION A DISGUISE TO DISCREETLY LIVE AMONG US


THE SET WAS MOSTLY FLIMSY PLASTER PAINTED TO LOOK LIKE METAL, BUT IT WAS ENOUGH TO BUILD OUR CITIES AND TOWNS WITH

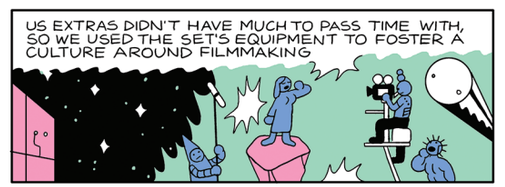

WE SET UP FARMS AROUND THE MAKESHIFT PAPIER-MÂCHÉ ALIEN LANDSCAPE AND TRADED RESOURCES FROM NEIGHBORING FILM AND T.V. SETS
FILMING IN PROGRESS


IN FACT, THE SET OF THE SITCOM [REDACTED] WAS SO INSPIRED BY WHAT WE WERE DOING THAT THEY ALSO ADAPTED OUR SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEM

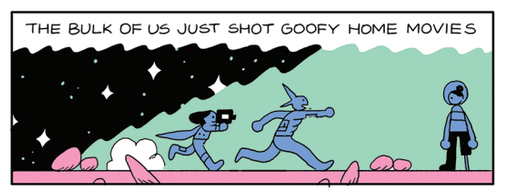

UNFORTUNATELY, [REDACTED] WAS CANCELED AFTER THEIR THIRD SEASON'S LACKLUSTER RATINGS


I STRUCK UP A ROMANCE WITH LINDA FROM THE COSTUME DEPARTMENT

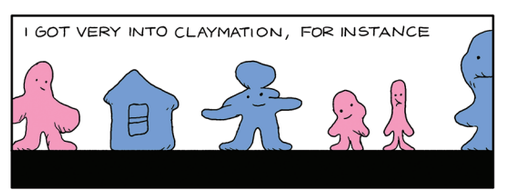
I BECAME A FURNITURE MAKER. WE HAD THREE CHILDREN TOGETHER

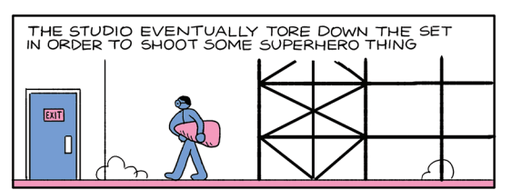

US EXTRAS DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TO PASS TIME WITH, SO WE USED THE SET'S EQUIPMENT TO FOSTER A CULTURE AROUND FILMMAKING

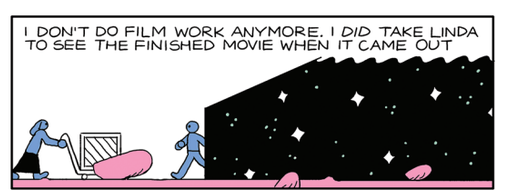
THE CREW WAS VERY HAPPY TO GIVE EVERYONE LESSONS IN WHATEVER WE NEEDED – CAMERAS, AUDIO, STORYBOARDING, EFFECTS, WHATEVER

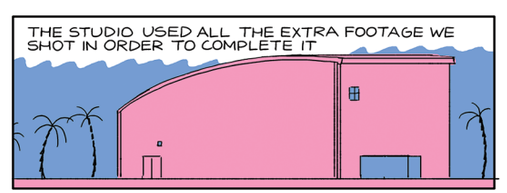

THE BULK OF US JUST SHOT GOOFY HOME MOVIES

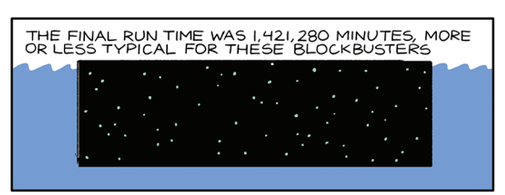
A FEW OTHERS GOT EXPERIMENTAL WITH IT. ARTY, WEIRD STUFF...

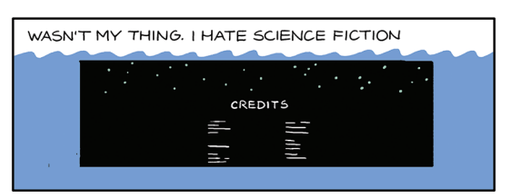

I GOT VERY INTO CLAYMATION, FOR INSTANCE


THE STUDIO EVENTUALLY TORE DOWN THE SET IN ORDER TO SHOOT SOME SUPERHERO THING
EXIT

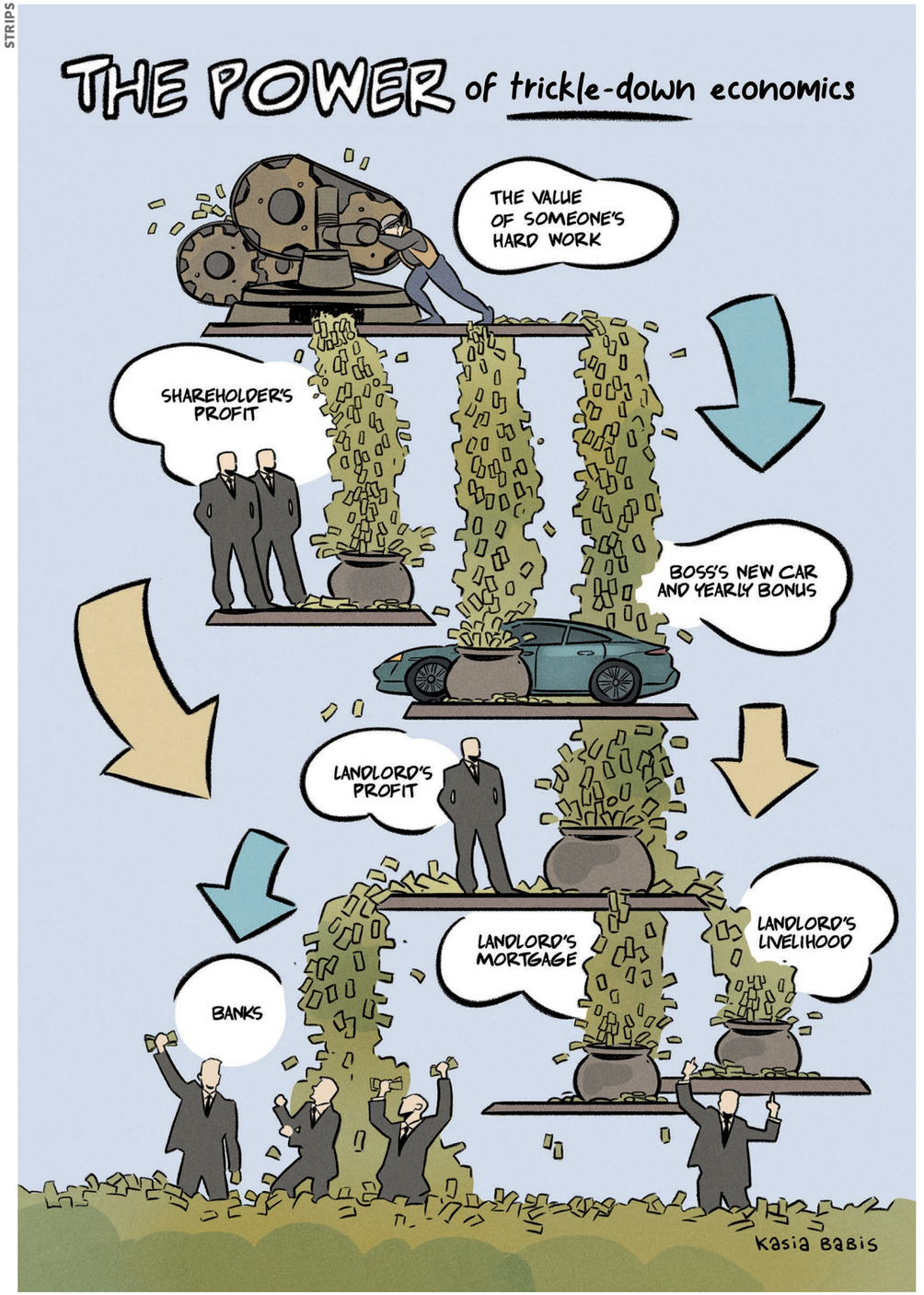

I DON'T DO FILM WORK ANYMORE. I *DID* TAKE LINDA TO SEE THE FINISHED MOVIE WHEN IT CAME OUT


THE STUDIO USED ALL THE EXTRA FOOTAGE WE SHOT IN ORDER TO COMPLETE IT

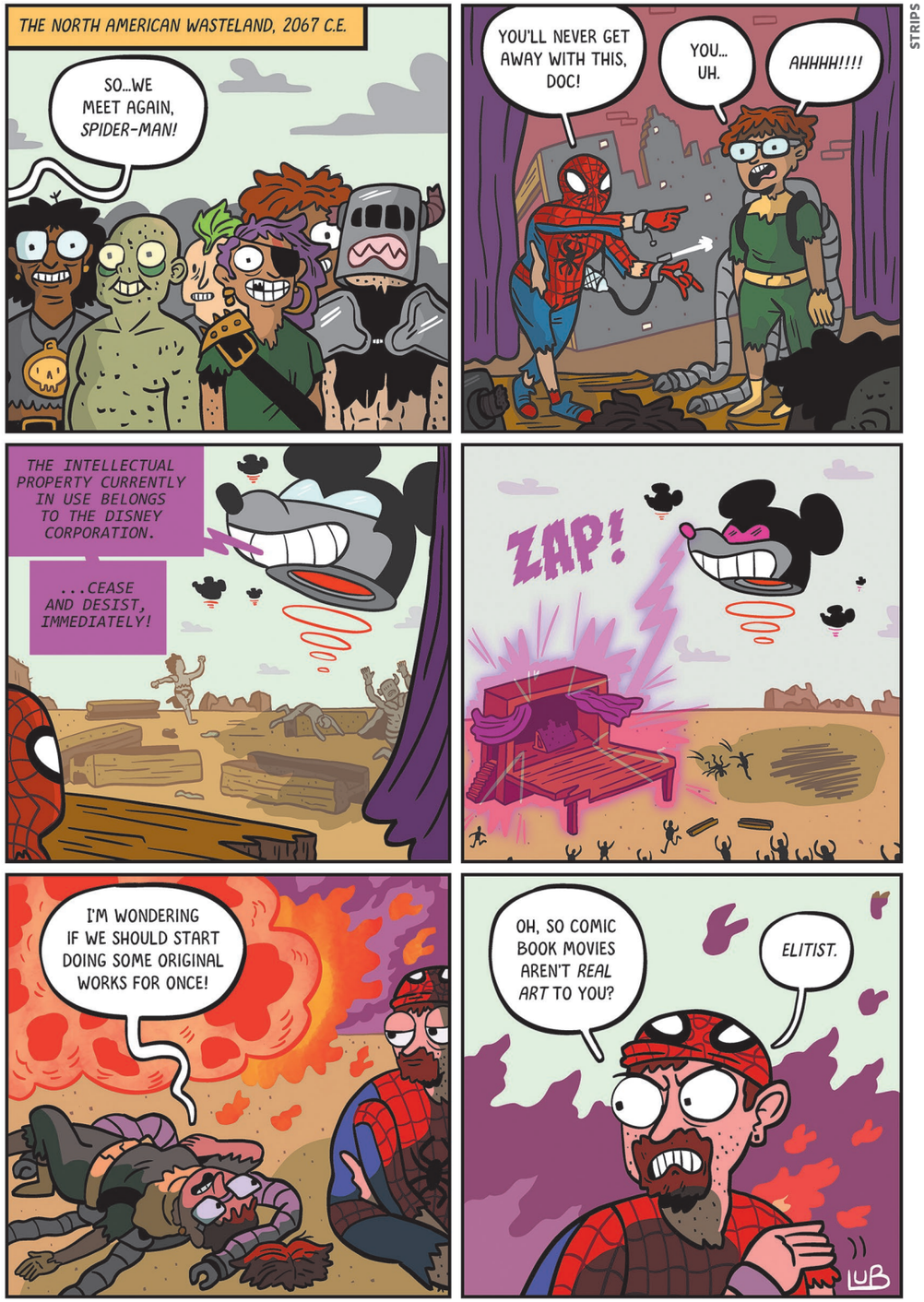

THE FINAL RUN TIME WAS 1,421,280 MINUTES, MORE OR LESS TYPICAL FOR THESE BLOCKBUSTERS


WASN'T MY THING. I HATE SCIENCE FICTION
CREDITS

Kasia Babis

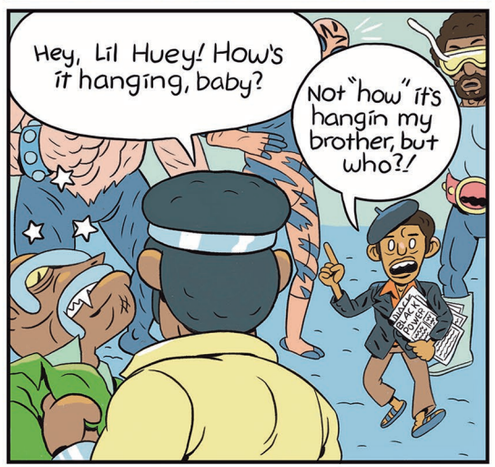


Matt Lubchansky



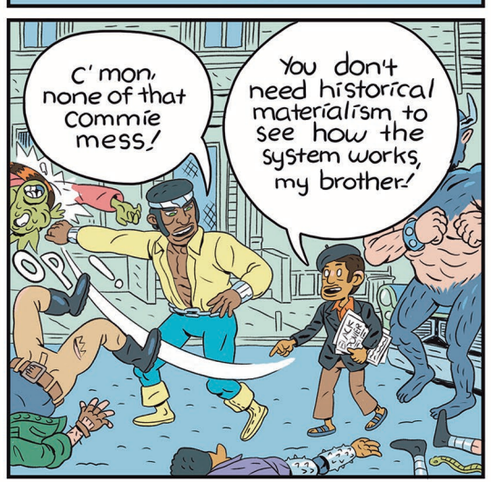
BLACK POWER MAN
We find our hepcat hero throwing his chicken and a biscuit down on one of his big-time drag enemies, Cottonmouth!
Uh Uh, Suga!
This the last time you rob round here!

FREEZE, TURKEYS!
WALOP

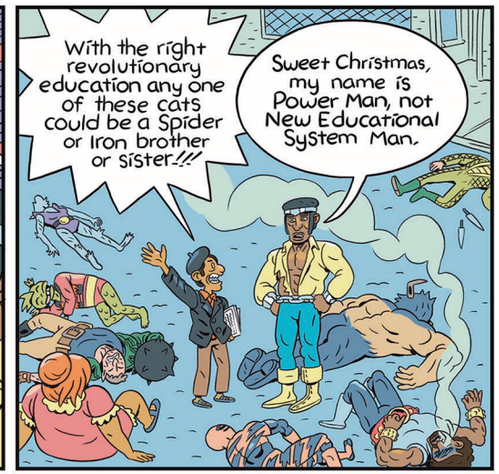

Hey, Lil Huey! How's it hanging, baby?
Not "how" it's hangin my brother, but who?!

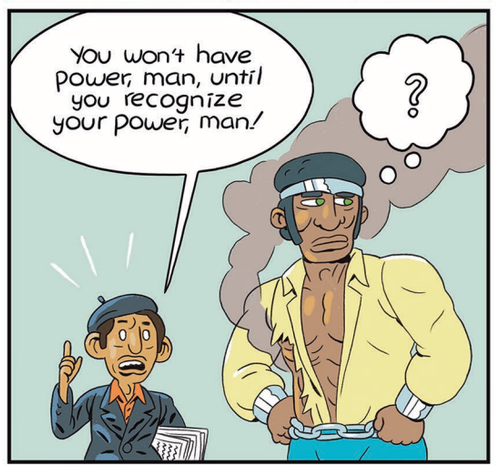
Spider-Man, Daredevil, Iron Man. Who are these devils to you?!
They're some heroes that fight criminals, baby!
WUD!

They are agents of the oppressor! You dig?! They come in and beat on our brothers and sisters for being poor!
WAM!
POW


C'mon, none of that commie mess!
You don't need historical materialism to see how the system works, my brother!

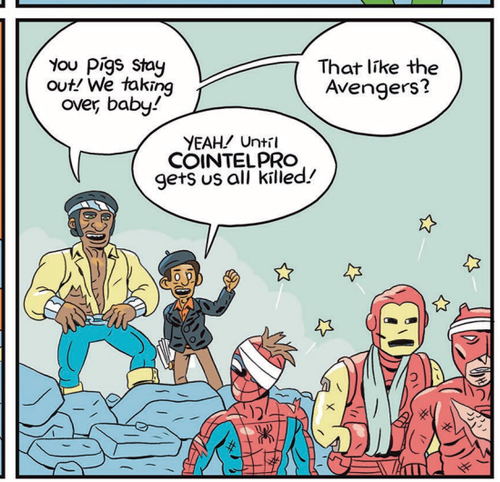
We all fighting for scraps down here in the gutter of Amerikkka while you coolin' with that appropriating white-boy iron fist!!!
POW
NAK


With the right revolutionary education any one of these cats could be a Spider or Iron brother or sister!!!
Sweet Christmas, my name is Power Man, not New Educational System Man.


You won't have power, man, until you recognize your power, man!
?

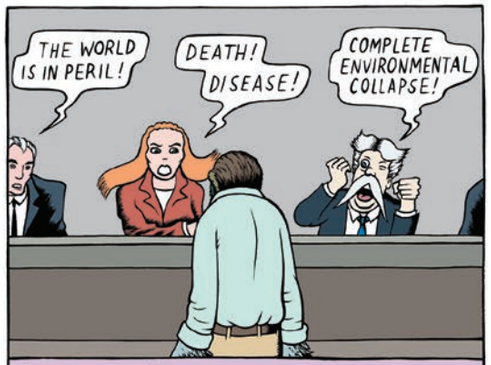
You can't shuck and jive out of this one, Cottonmouth!

FREEZE, TURKEYS!!!
WALLOP!


You pigs stay out! We taking over, baby!
That like the Avengers?
YEAH! Until COINTELPRO gets us all killed!

Eric Haven

WHILE TOURING CHERNOBYL, SOCIOLOGIST DAVID GORN WAS BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE SLOTH. HE SOON FOUND HE HAD, IN EFFECT, BECOME A HYBRID... A MAN-SLOTH.



DUE TO HIGHLY ELEVATED LEVELS OF SOCIETAL PANIC, MAN-SLOTH WAS ASKED TO ADDRESS AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

SLOWLY... EVER SO SLOWLY... MAN-SLOTH RAISED HIS THREE-TOED HANDS. WHEN HE FINALLY SPOKE, HIS VOICE WAS BUT A WHISPER...

AFTER MAN-SLOTH'S SIMPLE SUGGESTION, GLOBAL MARKETS BEGAN TO RISE AND THE FULL POWER OF THE WORLD ECONOMY WAS UNLEASHED.

EVENTUALLY, THE PANDEMIC WAS DEFEATED AND THE EARTH'S CLIMATE CRISIS WAS ABATED. NORMALCY RETURNED... THANKS TO THE CALMING REASSURANCE OF MAN-SLOTH.

The INKWELL

THE SAFE WORD IS COMICS.

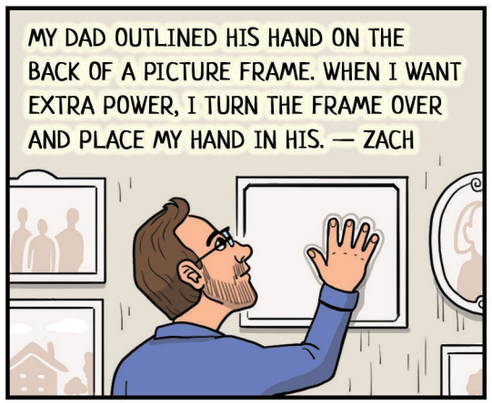
Illustration by Eleri Harris

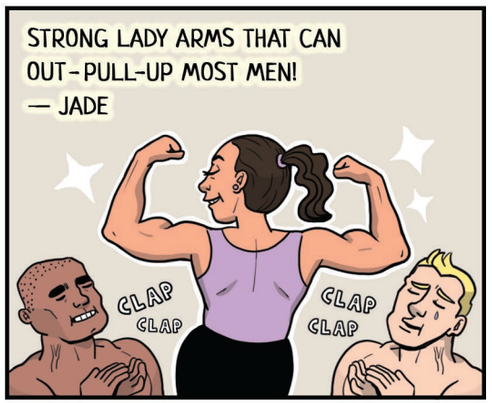
Love hurts, and emotions are raw right now. At *The Nib*, our passion is trying to make sense of the world through the art of comics. When you support The Inkwell, our monthly membership program, you empower us to keep going and to create a safe space for the stories that bind us all together. Submit today at **thenib.com/inkwell**.

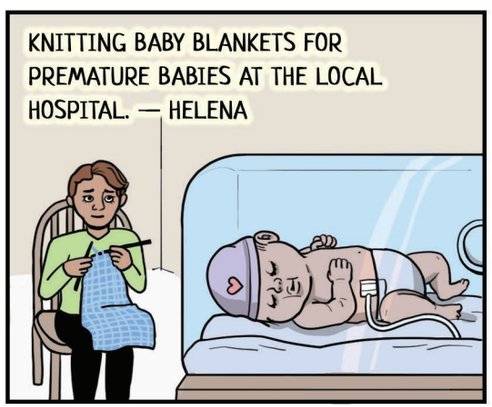
THE NIB

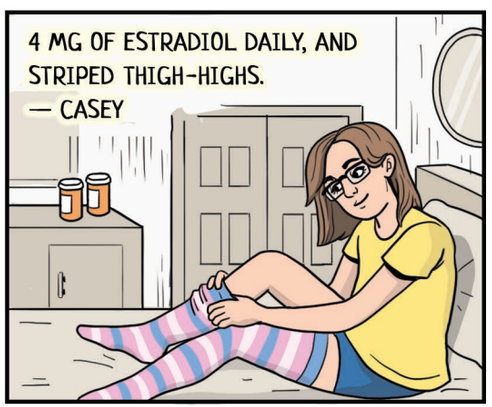
Letters to the Editor

Drawn by Chelsea Saunders

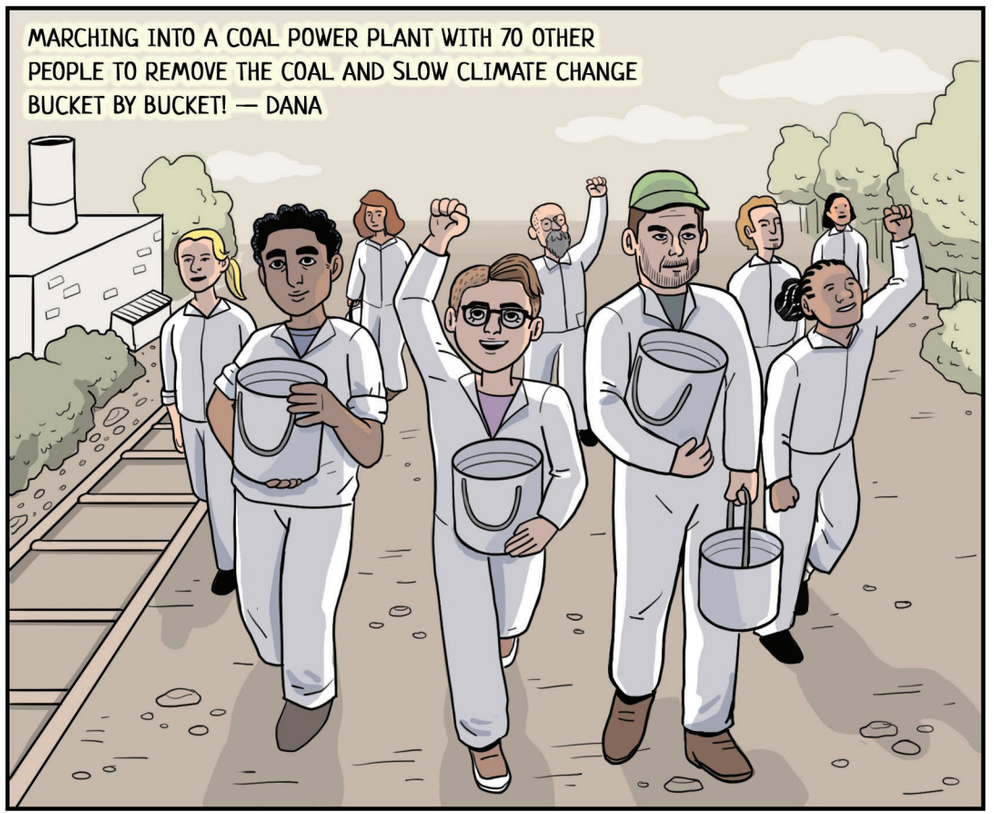


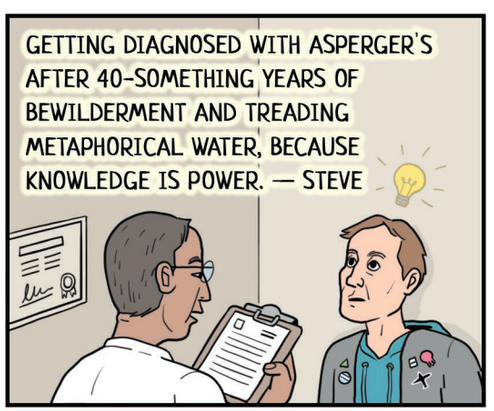


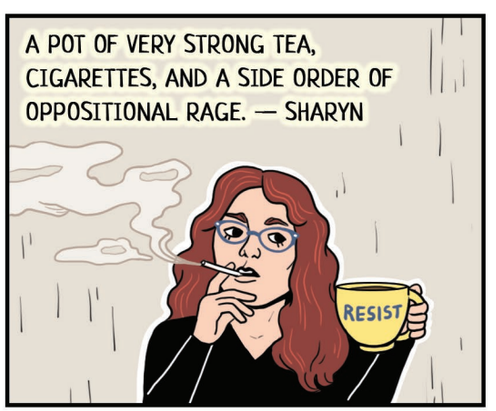




Drugs, activism, crystals imbued with magic... we all draw our energy from somewhere. We asked The Nib's *Inkwell members what gives them power.*







THE POWER ISSUE

THE NIB MMMasthead IS HERE!

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THE POWER ISSUE CONTRIBUTORS

NATE POWELL MAKES COMICS, BOTH FICTION AND NONFICTION. A RARE MUTATION ALLOWS HIM TO BE BOTH REMEMBERED AND FORGOTTEN SIMULTANEOUSLY —AN IDEAL INVISIBILITY.

MARIAH-ROSE MARIE IS A STORY ARTIST AND ILLUSTRATOR. SHE WISHES SHE COULD TELEPORT TO HELP OTHERS ESCAPE CRISIS. (BUT ALSO TO ACQUIRE HER FAVORITE FOODS FROM AROUND THE WORLD AT ANY TIME.)

BIANCA XUNISE IS A CARTOONIST BASED OUT OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. SHE'D LOVE TO BE ABLE TO SEE GHOSTS SO SHE COULD BE THEIR FRIEND.

ROSA COLÓN IS A COMICS ARTIST AND ILLUSTRATOR FROM SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO. SHE WOULD LOVE TO MANIFEST COLORFUL SPARKS FROM HER FINGERS.

DORIAN ALEXANDER IS A LITERARY SCHOLAR AND COMICS WRITER. HE WOULD LIKE TO BE A MAGIC-WIELDING TELEPORTER.

XULIN WANG IS A TORONTO-BASED ILLUSTRATOR AND COMICS ARTIST. SHE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE THE POWER TO FIND LOST OBJECTS, ESPECIALLY OF THE STUCK-IN-THE-COUCH VARIETY.

Also featuring: Max Loh, A. Andrews, Taylor Crockett, Ally Shwed, Ezra Claytan Daniels, Chelsea Saunders, Robin Tess, Maki Naro, Matthew Francis, Trinidad Escobar, Luke Healy, Vreni Stollberger, Thi Bui, Sophie Yanow, Colleen Tighe, Gemma Correll, Joyce Rice, Joey Alison Sayers, Charis JB, Michael DeForge, Kasia Babis, Eric Haven, Richie Pope, and Ben Passmore.

There was the FILM, the ALBUM, the TOUR, and NOW:
TENACIOUS D'S

INCLUDES downloadable audio book read by Jack Black and Kyle Gass!

POST-APOCALYPTO
THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

Out now from Fantagraphics Books
FANTAGRAPHICS.COM/POST-APOCALYPTO

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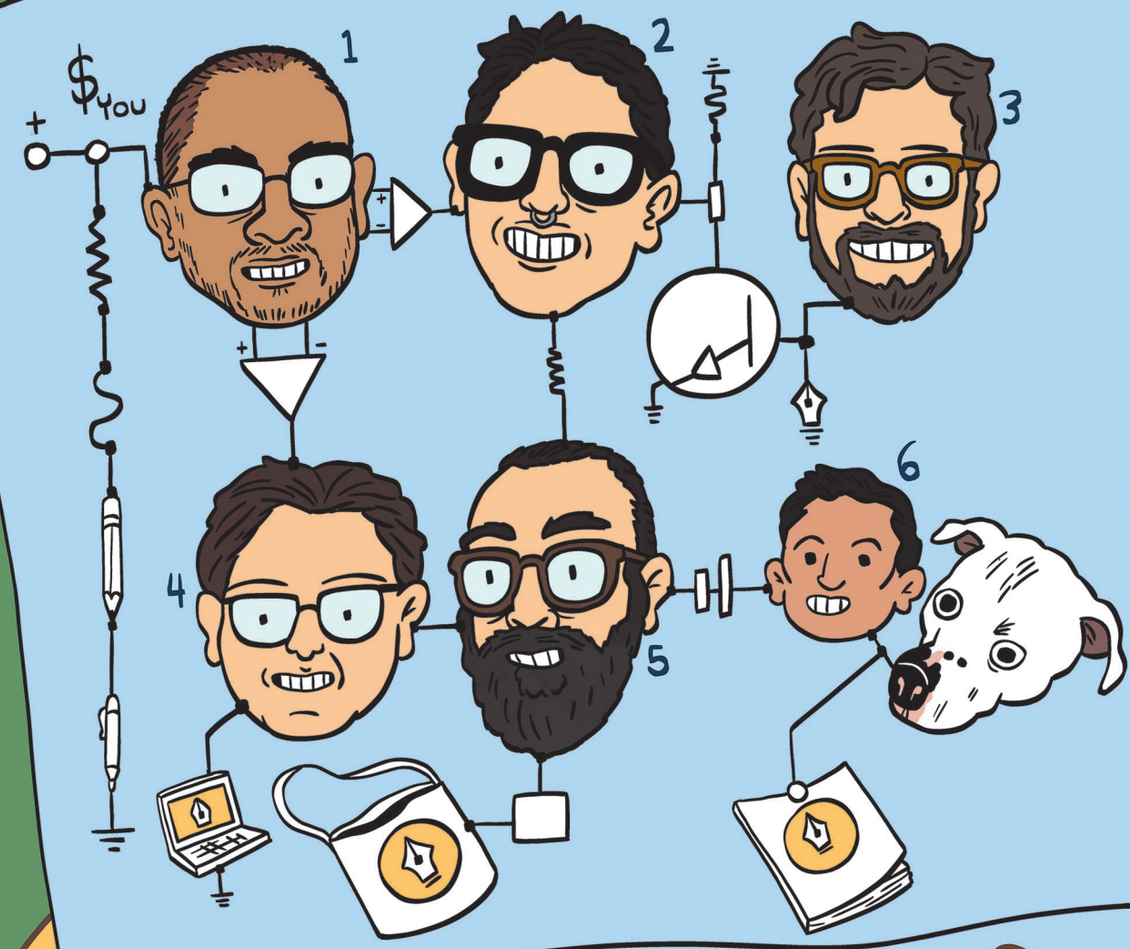
Illustrated by Matt Lubchansky.



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2. MONTUCKY WOODSTOCK
3. PAULI OJALA
4. RON NELSON
5. STEVEN CLOUD
6. LOGAN & REY

NO WAR! NO IMPERIALISM!
HATE

THE **POWER** ISSUE

ALL POWER TO THE CARTOONISTS!

Artists from around the world share stories of power and possibility, from Ta-Nehisi Coates discussing Black Panther to Nate Powell on cosplaying Nazis.

INSIDE:

- **Plutonium prospects!**
- **Patriarchal propaganda!**
- **Police profiteers!**
- **Persistent protesters!**

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